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THE
DOCTRINE of GRACE:
OR, THE
Office and Operations
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

Vindicated from
The Insults of INFIDELITY,
AND
The Abuses of FANATICISM:
CONCLUDING

With some Thoughts
(humbly offered to the consideration of the
ESTABLISHED CLERGY)

With regard to
The right method of defending Religion
against the attacks of either Party.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

WILLIAM Lord Bishop of GLOUCESTER.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N,

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Advertisement.

WHILE I was composing these sheets to vindicate the honour of Religion, it was given out that I was writing in defence of a late Minister of State.

I have a Master above, and I have one below; I mean, God and the KING. To them my services are bound.

The most sacred of all private ties are *Friendship* and *Gratitude*. The duties arising from these, tho' not altogether so extensive as the other, are subservient only to them.

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With respect to the great Minister here understood, His vindication, had he wanted any, could come with proper dignity, from no one but himself. And He, tho' for the first time, would be here only a Copier : I mean, of the example of that First of Romans* ; who being calumniated before the People by one Naevius, an obscure Plebeian, when he came to make his Defence, which happened to be on the anniversary of the battle of Zama, addressed the Assembly in this manner, "It was on this day, Romans, that "I subdued your mighty Rival for " Empire, the Carthaginian. Ill " would it become the friends of " Rome to waste such a day in " wrangling and contention. We

* Scipio Africanus.

" should

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" should now be returning thanks to
" the immortal Gods for the signal
" protection they afforded us in that
" glorious Conflict. Let us leave
" then this Fellow with himself, and
" ascend together to the Capitol, to
" offer to Jupiter the Deliverer;
" Who, on all occasions as well as
" this, hath vouchsafed to bestow
" upon me the early power and con-
" stant disposition to support the ho-
" nour of my Country. And let no
" God, auspicious to Rome, be left
" unsolicited, that the State in it's
" need, may never want such Ser-
" vants as I have still endeavoured
" to approve myself." When he had
said this, he stepped from the Rostrum
and left the Forum empty; all the
People following him to the Capi-
tol.

That the People followed him is
not surely the wonderful part of the
Story. The thing to be admired is,
that

vi. ADVERTISEMENT.

that a Statesman should lead the People to prayers.

This indeed is the last service a Patriot-Minister can render to his Country. And I am well persuaded (so exactly does the example fit the occasion) that our illustrious Modern would have deemed it the crown of his labours to have animated his Fellow-Citizens with a spirit of true piety towards God, as successfully as he inflamed them with a spirit of Zeal and Fortitude for the KING and Constitution.

PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

THE ABUSE, as well as the CONTEMPT of Religion have been almost as early as the first Institution of it : for, that corruption of heart, whose disorder, Religion was ordained to cure, has been ever struggling against it's Remedy.

In the days of Solomon, when *Wisdom* was at it's height, *Folly*, as we learn from many passages in his divine writings, kept equal paces with it. Hence it is that, after he had given many lively paintings of the deformed features of bigotry and irreligion, he subjoins directions to the sober Advocate of Piety and Virtue how best to suppress their insolence and vanity.

ANSWER

ANSWER NOT a Fool (says he) according to his Folly, lest thou also be like unto him. ANSWER a Fool according to his Folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit *.

Short, isolated Sentences were the mode in which Ancient wisdom delighted to convey its precepts for the regulation of human conduct. But when this natural method had lost the grace of novelty, and a growing refinement had new-coloured the candid simplicity of ancient manners, these instructive Sages found a necessity of giving to their moral maxims the seasoning and poignancy of *Paradoxes*. In these lively and useful sports of fancy, the Son of David, we are told, most excelled. We find them to abound in the writings which bear his name; and we meet with frequent allusions to them in all the parts of sacred Writ, under the

* Prov. xxvi. ver. 4, 5.

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names of *Riddles*, *Parables*, and *Dark-sayings*.

Now of all the examples of this species of instruction, there is none more illustrious, or fuller of moral Wisdom, than the *Paradox* just now quoted; or which, in the happiness of the expression, has so artfully conveyed the Key for opening the treasures of it. But as a *dark* conceit and a *dull* one have a great proximity in modern wit; and a refined *distinction* is held equivalent to a *contradiction* in modern reasoning, this *Paradox* of the Sage has been mistaken by his Critics for an absurdity of some of his Transcribers: And to be set right at an easier expence than unfolding *dark sentences of old*; that is to say, by exchanging them for *clearer*, of a *modern date*: which *Time* can make *ancient readings*; and which a careful collation

of its blunders may hereafter make
the *true*.

But they who are content to receive Antiquity in its native Garb, will, perhaps, rather, chuse to try if the apparent contradiction in the received Text cannot be fairly unriddled without any other aid than of the words themselves in which the *dark saying* is conveyed.

Had the *Folly* of these *Fools* been only of one condition or denomination, then the advice to *answer*, and *not to answer*, had been repugnant to it self. But as their *Folly* was of various kinds, in some of which, to *answer* might offend the dignity, and in others, *not to answer* might hurt the interests of Truth; to *answer*, and *not to answer*, is a consistent, and may, for ought our Critics know, be a very wise direction.

Had the Advice been given simply and without circumstance, to *answer*
the

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the Fool, and not to answer him, a Critic, who had a reverence for the Text, would satisfy himself in supposing, that the different directions referred, to the doing a thing *in and out of season*. But when, to the general advice about *answering*, this circumstance is added,—*according to his folly*, that interpretation is excluded; and a difficulty indeed arises; a difficulty, which has made those who have no reverence for the Text, to accuse it of absurdity and contradiction.

But now, to each Direction, reasons are subjoined. Why a *Fool should*, and why he *should not, be answered*: reasons, which, when set together and compared, are, at first sight, sufficient to make the Critic suspect, that all the contradiction lies in his own incumbered ideas.

1. The reason given, why a *Fool should not be answered according to his folly*, is, *lest he [the Answerer] be like unto him*:

2. The reason given, why *he should be answered according to his folly, is, lest he [the Fool] be wise in his own conceit.*

The cause assigned, of *forbidding to answer*, therefore, plainly insinuates, that the Defender of Religion should not imitate the Insulter of it in his *mode of disputation*; which may be comprised in *sophistry, buffoonry, and scurrility*. For what could so much *liken the Answerer to his idiot-Adversary* as the putting on his Fool's-coat in order to captivate and confound the rabble?

The cause assigned, of *directing to answer*, as plainly intimates, that the Sage should address himself to confute the Fool upon *the Fool's own false principles*, by shewing that they lead to Conclusions very wide from the impieties he would deduce from them. And if any thing will prevent the Fool from being *wise in his own conceit*, it must be the dishonour and the ridi-

cule

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cule of having his own Principles turned against him; while they are shewn to make for the very contrary purpose to that, for which he had employed them.

The supreme wisdom conveyed in the two precepts of this unravelled *Paradox* will be best understood by explaining the advantages arising from the observance of each of them.

I. *We are not to answer a fool according to his folly, lest we also be like unto him*—This is the reason given; and a good one it is; sufficient to make any sober man decline a Combat, where even Victory would bring dishonour with it. Now, if our *answer* be of such a nature that we also (tho' with contrary intentions) do injury to Truth, we become *like unto him* in the essential part of his Character. And surely Truth is never so grossly injured, nor its Advocates so dishonoured, as when they employ the foolish

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foolish arts of *Sophistry*, *Buffoonry*, and *Scurrility* in it's defence.

I. To use *fallacious* and inconclusive arguments in support of Truth is doing it infinite discredit. The practice tends to make men suspect that the questioned Truth is indeed an imposture, when it finds support in the common tricks of imposture: The least unfavourable inference will be, that the 'Truth' is defended not for its own sake, but for the sake of the Defender: This will make the serious Enquirer less attentive to the issue, and more jealous of the good faith of the Advocate; which cannot but lessen our reverence to one, and increase unfavourable prejudices towards the other. It tends to reduce the two Parties of *Wisdom* and *Folly* to a level, when they stand on the same uncertain and deceitful Ground. It tends to confound the distinction between *true* and *false*, and to make all terminate

in

in that most malignant species of *folly*,
Pyrronic doubt and uncertainty.

2. To employ *Buffoonry* in this service is to violate the Majesty of Truth, which can inforce its influence amongst men no longer than while its Sanctity of Characters is kept safe from insult.

Buffoonry deprives Truth of the only thing she wants in order to come off victorious, I mean, a *fair hearing*. To examine, Men must be serious; and to judge, they must be attentive to the argument. *Buffoonry* gives a levity to the mind, which makes it seek entertainment rather than instruction, in all that is offered to it's inspection. But let this poor talent be taken at its utmost worth, the use of it will still raise a suspicion, that the Advocate has his cause little at heart, while, in the very heat of an important controversy, he can allow himself to be amused and diverted by

by the levity of false wit; since, in matters that are understood to concern us most, we are wont to appear, as well as to be, most in earnest: and this scandal given by the Advocate will always prejudice the Cause.

3. Again, *personal abuse*, the favorite colour that glares most in the Fool's *Rhetoric*, is carefully to be avoided. For nothing can so assimilate the Answerer to the fool he is consulting as a want of *Charity*, which this mode of defence so openly betrays. To *Charity*, the Fool makes no pretensions. His very attempt is an avowed violation of it. He would deprive the world of what he himself confesses to be most useful to Society, and most pleasing to the natural sentiments of Man, that is to say, *Religion*. He would break down this barrier against Evil, he would rob us of this consolation of Humanity, and in such a Service he follows but his nature

nature and his office, when he vilifies and calumniates all who set themselves to oppose his impious projects. But the *end of the Commandment is Charity.*

These are the various modes of *answering* which are to be avoided, lest the Advocate of Religion become *like* the impious Caviller whom he would confute.

II. But then, *lest the Fool should be wise in his own conceit*, we are, at the same time, bid, *to give him an answer.* But how this can be done, in the manner here directed, namely, *according to his folly*, and yet the Answerer not become *like unto him*, but, on the contrary, be able to produce the effect here intimated, the cure of the vain conceit of his own superior Wisdom, is a difficulty indeed; a difficulty worthy the Advocate of truth to undertake: and which a Master of his Subject may hope to overcome, in contriving to
confute

confute the Fool on his own *false Principles*, by shewing that they lead to a Conclusion very opposite to those free Consequences he has laboured to deduce from them. And if any thing will allay the *Fool's* vain conceit of himself, it must be such a *sense* of the dishonour. For what can be more shamefull than to have his own Principles shewn to be destructive of his own Conclusions? What more mortifying, than to have those Principles, in whose invention he so much gloried, or in whose use he so much confided, fairly turned, by all the rules of good Logic, to his own confusion. Nor is the Partisan of falsehood more humbled than the Cause of truth advanced, by thus answering a Fool *according to his folly*. For that Victory is, in common estimation, held most compleat, where the Adversary is thus made to contribute to his own overthrow: that System being naturally
esteemed

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esteemed contemptible, whose most plausible support draws after it the ruin of what it was raised to uphold.

And thus, as the *Wise man* directs, is this forward Fool to be treated, whether it be by *silence* or *confutation*.

That, in general, his folly is to be repressed *according to the dictates of true Wisdom*, the nature of the thing sufficiently informs us : there was no need of a particular direction to enforce the expediency and necessity of that. But then, besides, it may sometimes happen that the interests of Truth shall require, his being answered even *according to his folly* : and, as our duty here is very liable to abuse, it was expedient to obviate the danger. This, we may observe, the sacred Writer hath done, and with much art and elegance of address.

It may indeed be said, Why this practised obliquity in defence of Truth ?

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Is not the purity of her nature rather defiled, than her real interests advanced by this indirection? And does not Wisdom seem to tell us, that it becomes her dignity to repress Folly by those arms only which Wisdom herself hath edged and tempered; that Truth, by the information of her own light, points out the straight road to her abode; and forbids us to riggle into her presence thro' by-paths, and the cloudy Medium of falsehood?

But they who talk thus do not sufficiently reflect on the condition of our weak and feeble-sighted Nature, which can ill bear the clear and unshaded light of Truth. On which account it is so contrived, in the beautiful Order of things, that *Folly*, by thus administering to her own defeat, should bring us back again into the ways of Wisdom, from which she had seduced us.

The

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The REDEEMER of Mankind, in condescension to the infirmities of those he came to save, hath taken the same advantage of this established Order: For, more effectually to silence those *Fools* who questioned his Mission and his office, he *answers them according to their folly*; that is, he demonstrates to them, on their own erroneous Principles concerning the nature and end of the Law, (formed on rabbinical traditions and the reveries of Greek Philosophers) he demonstrates to them; I say, the truth and reasonableness of the Gospel. The pure and unabated splendor of Truth, ushered in by Wisdom, would have only added to their judicial blindness: for to bear it undazzled they had need of the presence of that SPIRIT OF TRUTH, which was not yet come, but only promised to them. When He came, indeed, and while he continued, in an *extraordinary* manner,

to enlighten the understandings of the Faithful, there was no occasion for this enforced ministry of *Folly*, to contribute to her own destruction. And therefore the *first* Propagators of the Gospel proceeded more directly to the establishment of the Truth, and on the solid principles of *Wisdom* only. Yet now again, in the *ordinary* communications of GRACE, this direction of the *Wise man* will be as useful as ever, to the interests of Virtue and Religion, *Answer a Fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.*

A DIS-

A
DISCOURSE
CONCERNING THE
OFFICE and OPERATIONS
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT.

THE blessed Jesus came into the world ON THE PART OF GOD, to declare pardon and salvation to the forfeited posterity of Adam. He testified the truth of his mission by amazing miracles, and sealed man's redemption in his Blood, by the more amazing sacrifice of himself upon the cross.

But as the REDEMPTION, so procured, could only operate on each Individual un-

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der

2 *A Discourse concerning*

der certain conditions of FAITH and OBE-
DIENCE, very repugnant to our corrupt na-
ture, the blessed Redeemer, on leaving the
world, promised to his followers his inter-
cession with the Father, to send amongst
them another divine Person ON THE PART
OF MAN, namely the HOLY GHOST, call-
ed the *Spirit of Truth*, and the *Comforter*;
who, agreeably to the import of these
appellations, should co-operate with man
in establishing his FAITH, and in perfect-
ing his OBEEDIENCE; or, in other words,
should *sanctify him to redemption*.

This is a succinct account of the Œco-
nomy of Grace; entirely consonant to our
most approved conceptions of the divine
nature and of the human condition. For
[if man was to be reinstated in a free-gift
which had been justly forfeited, we cannot
but confess, that as, on the one hand,
the restoration might be made on what
conditions best pleased the giver; so, on
the other, that God would graciously pro-
vide that it should not be made in vain.

An atonement, therefore, for the of-
fended majesty of the FATHER, was first

the HOLLY SPIRIT. 3

to be procured; and this was the Work of the SON: and then a remedy was to be provided for that helpless condition of Man, which hindered the atonement from producing its effect, and this was the office of the HOLY GHOST: so that both were joint-workers in the great business of reconciling God to man.

What therefore I propose to consider is, the *office and operations of the Holy Spirit*, as they are delivered to us in sacred Scripture.

His Office in general is, as hath been observed, to establish our *faith*, and to perfect our *obedience*: and this he doth by ENLIGHTENING THE UNDERSTANDING, and by RECTIFYING THE WILL. All this is necessarily collected from the words of Jesus, which contain this important PROMISE. *I will pray the Father, (says he) and he shall give you another COMFORTER, that he may abide with you for ever; even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH—He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you—which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father*

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shall send in my name. He shall TEACH
YOU ALL THINGS (1).

By *teaching us all things*, under the joint characters of the *Spirit of Truth* and of the *Comforter*, we are necessarily to understand *all things* which concern FAITH and OBEDIENCE.

These two distinct branches of his office I shall consider in their order.

I.

And first of all, let us observe the method employed by divine wisdom in manifesting the operations of the HOLY GHOST, as the SPIRIT AND GUIDE OF TRUTH. (2)

The first extraordinary attestation of his descent was at the day of Pentecost, in the GIFT OF TONGUES.

Besides the great and almost indispensable use of this endowment on the first Disciples of Christ, who were to convey

(1) John xiv. 16, & seq.
xvi. 13.

(2) John

the HOLY SPIRIT. 5

the glad tidings of the Gospel throughout the whole earth; the elegance and propriety in the choice of this miracle to attest the real descent of that *Spirit* who was to *teach us all things*, can never be enough admired: for WORDS being the human vehicle of our knowledge, this gift was the fittest precursor of the *Spirit of Truth*.

But this first opening scene of wonders, which was to prepare and influence all the subsequent acts of man's redemption, a late eminent writer would, from a SIGN, reduce to a *Shadow*; on which he seems to think, Fancy set itself to work, to produce a prodigy. "The Gift of Tongues
" upon the Day of Pentecost (says the learned person) *was not lasting, but instantaneous*
" *and transitory*; not bestowed upon them
" for the constant work of the ministry,
" but as an *occasional Sign only*, that the
" person endowed with it was a chosen
" minister of the gospel: which Sign,
" as soon as it had served that particular

" purpose,

“ purpose, seems to have ceased, and
 “ totally to have vanished (3).”

Let us examine now, the grounds of this new interpretation, so apparently derogatory to the operation of the holy Spirit.

The learned Writer proceeds in order; first to reduce the Type, or visible Sign of the gift, the **FIERY TONGUES**: for having declared the Gift itself to be instantaneous and transitory, he has very consistently endeavoured to shew that the *Sign* of it was merely fanciful. He explains it to be no more than a sudden flash of lightening, “ which, he says, “ like all other Phænomena of that sort, “ no sooner appeared, than vanished (4).”

His reason for this opinion is, “ because when the Disciples spoke in “ strange tongues to the Multitude, the “ conclusion they drew from that cir-

(3) Dr. *Middleton's* Essay on the Gift of Tongues, Vol. II. of his Works, p. 79.

(4) P. 81.

“ circumstance

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“ circumstance seems to shew, that the celestial Fire did not, at that Time, sit upon their Heads (5).”

But the learned Person has omitted to bring this other circumstance into his account, that when the *clowen Tongues appeared upon each of them*, they were assembled together in a private room, sequestered and apart: and that it was not till the thing was *noised abroad*, and the *Multitude come together*, to inquire into the truth of it, that the Apostles *spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance*. Now between this visible descent of the Holy Spirit, and their speaking to the Multitude, a considerable time must have intervened; sufficient to convince every one from the steady duration of the appearance, that it was not natural but miraculous. And this the original words well express: *ἕκαστος ἐπ' ἑα ἑαυτοῦ αὐτῶν*, well rendered by the Phrase of *SITTING upon each of them*: Words so inconsistent with a momentary appearance, that it would be trifling with common sense to deduce

(5) P. 82.

(such

such an interpretation from oblique circumstances and collateral reasoning. It is true the learned Writer concedes, even from the Sign's being only a *sudden Flash*, which vanished almost as soon as it appeared, that "it indicated something miraculous and supernatural (6)." But I am afraid, that those who are the readiest to embrace his Physiology, will not be the first to admit his theological inference; especially as it is so gratuitously deduced. It may therefore not be improper to scrutinize the evangelical account of this visible descent with a little more exactness. In this place (we see) the *fiery Tongues* are said, *to sit upon each of them*: and in other places of the Scripture, mentioning the like descent of the Holy Spirit in visible Form, it is described in such terms as denote a very different appearance from a *sudden Flash of Lightning*. St. Matthew tells us, that *the Spirit of God descended like a Dove*, *ὡς ὁ ἀεὶς ἐπελάττει*; that is, with a Dove-like motion; as birds, when about to settle upon any thing, first hover over it and shake

(6) P. 82.

their

the HOLY SPIRIT. 9

their wings: it then *lighted upon Jesus*, ἐρχόμενον ἐπ' αὐτόν. So, in the place in question, the same Spirit is said to descend under the appearance of *cloven Tongues, like as of Fire*, ὡς εἰς πυρρός. In the former instance, only the *motion* of the descent is described: in this, both the *motion*, *figure*, and *colour*. And the term of *cloven Tongues*, which the sacred Historian employs to describe the *motion*, and which the learned Writer takes up to prove his hypothesis of a momentary existence of the phænomenon, proves it, in truth, to be of some continuance. "We cannot (says he) think it strange that fire flashing from Heaven, and suddenly vanishing, should yield some resemblance of *Tongues* to the eyes of the MULTITUDE; for this is no more than what is *natural*, and what we may observe, in some measure, from every flame that flashes from the clouds, and breaks itself, *of course*, in a number of small pointed particles not remote from that shape (7)."

To this let us, in the first place, observe, that the thing seen, *ὡς αἶμα πυρὸς*, on the heads of the Apostles was no more an elementary *fire*, than the thing seen *ὡς αἶμα περισσεύων* on the head of Jesus was a real *dove*: for as only a *dove-like motion* is intimated in this latter expression, so only a *flame-like motion* is intimated in the former; and what this was, the Historian tells us in its effect, the *appearance of cloven Tongues*. The learned Person is certainly mistaken in supposing a *sudden flash of lightening* has *naturally* the appearance of cloven Tongues. Such a phænomenon exhibits to the eye of the beholder only a line of light angularly broken into several directions, very different from the form of Tongues, whether whole or *cloven*. Whenever a flame assumes this appearance, it is become *stationary*, as this was, which, the Historian says, *SAT upon each of them, ἑκάστης*: and then its *natural* motion raising it upwards, it represents, when divided lengthwise, a pyramidal or *tongue-like figure, cloven*. A demonstra-

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the HOLY SPIRIT. II

tion that the Appearance in question was not *momentary*, but of some continuance.

The learned Writer having thus accounted for the Precursor of the gift, comes to consider the gift itself; and attempts to shew that "the chief or *SOLE*"
"END RATHER of the *gift of Tongues*"
"was to serve as a sensible sign in that"
"*infirm State* of the first Christians, that"
"those to whom it was vouchsafed were"
"under a divine influence, and acted by"
"a divine commission.—So that it is"
"not reasonable to think that this *di-*"
"*versity of Tongues* was given to the"
"Apostles for the sake of converting those"
"people before whom they then spoke"
"(8)." Hence (says he) "it appears that"
"the gift was not of a stable or per-"
"manent nature (9)." That is, it was
no lasting endowment, to enable the Apostles to perform their ministry amongst those whose language they had never learnt; but a momentary power, which served that day for a *sign* to the Multitude: and

(8) P. 87.

(9) P. 89.

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consequently, they had these languages to learn anew when they wanted the use of them. This, I say, appears to be his Inference; for the arguments he brings to support his principle, will lead us to no other. At the same time it must be observed he has laid down the proposition so loosely, and ambiguously, that, when considered alone, it may either mean, "That the power of speaking strange languages was only infused occasionally, like the power of working miracles;" or else, "That the knowledge of the language, when infused, was not lasting, but momentary, like the cloven Tongues; the inspired Linguist presently falling back into his natural state of idiotism."

In the first sense, the Assertion seems to be well founded: and from its sobriety, and more especially from the extravagance of the other meaning, which leaves but little distinction between the power of speaking strange Tongues at the day of Pentecost, and the extatick ravings of modern Fanatics, one would wish to find

find it was the sense we could fairly ascribe to it.

But then all the arguments employed by the learned Person, for the support of his proposition, confine us, as we shall now see, to the other sense.

1. His first argument is the *authority* of some modern Critics (1). But I may be excused, if I suffer these to have no more weight with me when they contradict a received interpretation, than they usually have with him when they confirm it.

2. His second argument is an inference from Scripture it self. "It appears (he thinks) from the Stories of Cornelius's family, and the Disciples at Ephesus (both of whom spoke with tongues on the Holy Ghost's descending on them, while Peter preached to one and Paul baptised the other) that the gift was not lasting but instantaneous; and given only for a sign of their real admission into the Church of Christ:" for, as he truly observes, "here was no room
"to suppose another use, the several As-

(1) P. 89.

“semblies being all of the same speech and
“language (2).”

But here the learned person from particular instances draws a general conclusion: because, in this case, he *sees no other use* than for a *sign*, he concludes the gift to be momentary in all other. By a better way of reasoning therefore, he will suffer us to conclude, that where we do *see another use*, as in the gift at Pentecost, that there it was as lasting as the use to which it served: And an equitable Judge will conclude for us both, that the same endowment which in one instance was transitory, might, in another, be very lasting.

The converts of the family of Cornelius, and the disciples at Ephesus were in a private station in the Church: so that an instantaneous exercise of the power fully answered it's end: It was a *sign* that these converts were indeed become members of Christ's mystical body, the Church, as well by the baptism of the Spirit as of Water. But the case was different with

(2) P. 85, 6.

respect

respect to the Apostles: They were the appointed preachers of the Gospel to remote and barbarous nations: an office not to be discharged without a competent knowledge of the various languages of the Earth. We find them, on the day of Pentecost, miraculously endowed with this knowledge. What are we to think, but that the PRINCIPAL end of the gift was to qualify them for their mission?

The learned writer's third argument in support of his opinion, is taken from the stile of Scripture, and is to this purpose: "That were the gift of tongues lasting, it would have been employed in the composition of their *Gospels* and *Epistles*: But that it was not there employed, appears from the barbarity of the stile; since whatever comes from God must be perfect in its kind; so that, in this case, we should be sure to find the purity of Plato, and the eloquence of Cicero:" But the consideration of this argument coming more properly under another head of this discourse, to that we shall reserve it, and might here take leave of this subject, the duration of the

gift of tongues; as the common opinion remains unimpaired by his attack, and is still in possession of all the circumstances of credit in which he found it.

Yet since this new interpretation, (which makes the gift so transitory, and the power conferred by it so momentary) may be applied by licentious men to purposes the learned person never intended, it cannot be too carefully considered.

Who hath not heard of the wondrous powers of the imagination, when raised and inflamed by fanaticism? And tho' we be ignorant of its utmost force, yet we know enough of it to convince us, that this Faculty of the mind, the nurse and parent of enthusiasm, is able to work like magic in its insatinations. There are many well attested cases in modern History, (altho' we should agree that they have lost nothing of the marvellous in the telling) where Enthusiasts, in their extasies, have talked very fluently in the learned languages, of which they had a very imperfect knowledge in their sober intervals. "When I saw (says the noble Author of the *Characteristicks*)
" the

“the Gentleman, who has writ lately in
 “defence of revived prophecy, (and has
 “since fallen himself into the prophetic
 “extasies) lately under an *agitation* (as
 “they call it) uttering prophecy in a pom-
 “pous latin stile, of which out of his ex-
 “tasy, it seems, he is wholly incapable,
 “it brought into my mind the latin poet’s
 “description of the Sibyl, &c. (3).” And
 it is remarkable, that instances of this kind
 have occurred so frequently, that Thyraeus,
 a famous popish Exorcist, as blinded as he
 was by the superstitious impiety of demoni-
 acal *possessions*, has, in his *Directory*, ex-
 pressly declared it as the common opinion
 of his brotherhood, that the *speaking*
strange languages is no certain sign of a
possession, and warns the Exorcist against
 this illusion (4)..

Now were it generally believed that the
speaking with strange tongues in the first ages
 of Christianity, was a mere fleeting, transi-
 tory power, the bold licence of our times

(3) *Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, § 6.

(4) *De Dæmoniis*, c. xxii.

would be ready to conclude that it was much of the same kind with these feats of modern Fanatics. For let us consider how the matter would be thought to stand, on the representation of this learned writer: A sudden flash of lightening, under the fancied figure of *cloven-tongues*, kindles the fiery imaginations of a number of enthusiastic men, met together in a tumultuous assembly, and heating one another's fanaticism by mutual collision; and in this temper, *they began to speak with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.*

I shall therefore endeavour to shew, in the last place, that this new interpretation contradicts what SCRIPTURE itself expressly delivers of the USE and, by necessary inference, of the *duration* of this *gift of tongues* on the day of Pentecost.

The learned writer affirms, "that this knowledge was transitory, serving only for an occasional sign, and not intended for the use of the apostolic mission." Now Jesus himself tells us, that it was intended for this use: Who, on his leaving the world, comforts his disciples with this promise:—*But ye shall receive POWER, after that the*
holy

the HOLY SPIRIT. . 19

holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be WITNESSES unto me, unto the **UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH** (5), recorded by the Evangelic writer, as an introduction to his narrative of the miraculous gift of tongues; which he considers as the completion of this promise; and that the *power to be received*, was the power then given: the use of which, as we see, was to enable the disciples to become *witnesses unto him, unto the uttermost part of the Earth*. We find St. Paul had this gift, not only in the fullest measure, but with a proportionable duration: For, the Apostle endeavouring to moderate the excessive value which the Corinthians set upon *spiritual gifts*, observes, that, with regard to the most splendid of them all, the *gift of tongues*, he himself had the advantage of them all——*I thank my God* (says he) *that I speak with tongues more than you all* (6). The occasion shews that he considered this as a *spiritual gift*: and his using the *present time* shews that he boasted of it as then in his

(5) Acts i. 8.

(6) c. xiv. ver. 18---μᾶλλον γλωσσῶναις λαλῶν.

possession.

possession. But why did he speak with more tongues than all of them? For a good reason; he was the peculiar Apostle of the Gentiles; and was to preach the Gospel amongst remote and barbarous nations. Whom then shall we believe? Shall we take his word who promised the gift; shall we take his, on whom it was bestowed; or shall we prefer to both, the conjecture of this learned and ingenious Modern?

Would reason or the truth of things suffer us to be so compliant, we might con-
cede to unbelievers all which they fancy the learned writer has procured for them, "that the power of tongues was temporary, and, like the power of healing, possessed occasionally," without being alarmed at any consequence they will be able to deduce from it. For let it but be granted (and they must grant it, or else prevaricate) that the gift of tongues returned as often as they had occasion for it, and it is no great matter where it resided in the interim.

But neither reason nor the truth of things will suffer us to be thus compliant. The power of healing or of working miracles

(to which the learned writer compares the gift of tongues) is, during the whole course of its operation, one continued arrest or diversion of the general laws of matter and motion: it was fit therefore that this power should be given occasionally. But the *speaking with tongues*, when once the gift was conferred, became from thenceforth, a natural power; just as the free and perfect use of the members of the body, after they have been restored by miracle to the exercise of their natural functions. Indeed to have *lost* the gift after this temporary use of it, would imply another miracle; for it must have been by actual deprivation, unless we suppose the Apostles mere inanimate organs thro' which divine sounds were conveyed. In a word, it was as much in the course of nature for an Apostle, whom the holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, had enabled to speak a strange language, ever afterwards to have the use of that language, as it was for the Cripple, whom Jesus had restored to the use of his limbs on the Sabbath-day, ever afterwards to walk, run, and perform all the functions of a man perfectly sound. In one thing,

thing, indeed, the power of healing, and of speaking with strange tongues coincided; as the Disciples could not heal at all times, so neither could they speak at all times in what unknown dialect they should chuse to converse: Yet when once, by the holy Spirit, they had been enabled to speak and understand a language, they could not but retain the use of it, with the same facility as if they had acquired it in the ordinary way of instruction. But the confusion in this affair, and the learned person's embarrass when he states the question, arise from not distinguishing in these two cases between the *active power* and the *passive gift*. In healing, the Apostles are to be considered as the workers of a miracle; in speaking strange tongues, as the persons on whom a miracle is performed.

Thus far with regard to this extraordinary descent of the Holy Ghost, as the GUIDE OF TRUTH. And this being as well the FIRST FRUITS as the TYPE and SEAL of all inspired knowledge, the sacred Historian thought proper to give us a circumstantial relation of the fact.

The

The other endowments of the *spirit of truth* he hath mentioned only occasionally. So that had not the Subject of one of St. Paul's Epistles led the writer to enumerate those various gifts, as they were afterwards distributed amongst the Faithful, we should have had a very imperfect knowledge of them. The Church of Corinth was foolishly elated by spiritual pride; which St. Paul endeavoured to repress and humble: and in applying his remedy, he begins with reckoning up those various graces, the credit of which they had abused in the indulgence of this unhappy temper.--*Concerning spiritual gifts* (says he) *I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. To one is given by the spirit the WORD OF WISDOM; to another, the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same spirit; to another, the GIFTS OF HEALING by the same spirit; to another, WORKING OF MIRACLES; to another PROPHECY; to another DISCERNING OF SPIRITS (7). And when he comes to apply his premisses, and to shew the inferiority*

(7) 1 Cor. xii. 1 & seq.

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of all these gifts to *Charity*, he recapitulates the most distinguished of them in the following manner :---*tho' I have the gift of PROPHECY, and understand all MYSTERIES, and all KNOWLEDGE; and tho' I have all FAITH so that I could remove mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing* (8).

In explaining the nature of these gifts, the two passages will afford light to one another.

The first he mentions, is the WORD OF WISDOM (9). By which, I think, we must understand, *all the great principles of natural religion* (1). The ancients used the term in this very sense : and we can hardly give it any other, in the place before us, where we see it distinguished from the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE (2), which follows, and evidently means *all the great principles of the revealed*; the term *γνώσις* being as peculiarly applied by Christian writers to *revealed*

(8) c. xiii. 2.

(9) Λόγος σοφίας.

(1) In this sense St. Paul uses the word, Col. iv.

5. Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τὸς ἑξ ὧν.

(2) Λόγος γνώσεως.

Religion (3), as *σοφία* is by the pagan, to natural: and it is no less a generic term than the other, being mentioned in the next chapter, with one of its species,---all MYSTERY and all knowledge: for mystery is that part which regards the interpretation of those jewish prophecies that concern the *new Dispensation*. In a word, our Apostle speaking, in another place, of Christ, who perfected Revelation built, from its first delivery and rudiments, on *natural Religion*, uses the two terms in these assigned significations. — In whom (says he) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (4).

(3) St. Paul uses it in this sense; 2 Cor. xii. 6. *Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' ἔτι τῇ ΓΝΩΣΕΙ.* And St. Peter 1 Ep. iii. 7. *Οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐμὸι, οὐνοὶ καὶ γῆ καὶ τὰ ὕδατα τῆς ΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ.* From this term, those early Heretics, who so much deformed the simplicity and purity of the Christian Faith by visionary pretences to a superior knowledge of revelation, took their name, the *Gnostics*.

(4) *Εἰς τὸν Θεὸν ἐκκλινόμενοι τὴν ἀλήθειαν τῆς ΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ ἀποκερυφόμενοι.* Coloss. ii. 3. He uses the word *ἀποκερυφόμενοι*, as having in the foregoing verse called this wisdom and knowledge *το μυστήριον*

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The next gift the Apostle recapitulates, is FAITH. In the following chapter, where these graces are again mentioned, he explains its nature to us, in calling it a *faith which could remove mountains*, or such a one as was attended with the power of controlling nature; alluding to that want of faith, with which Jesus upbraids his Disciples, where he says,—*had ye faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye should say unto this mountain, Remove hence into yonder place, and it shall remove* (5).

The two other gifts which follow, of HEALING and WORKING MIRACLES, are two specieses of this genus. By *healing* is meant that salutary assistance administered to the sick, in a solemn office of the

τῆς Θεῆς. That the word σοφία is used in the sense here contended for, is plain from his immediately subjoining a warning against vain philosophy, οὐκ ἐστὶν μὴ τις ὑμᾶς ἐξαπατᾷ ὁ ἐν λόγῳ διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας, &c. As much as to say, I present you with the treasures of true wisdom---οἱ ἀπαγαγόντες τῆς σοφίας---take care that no body deceive you with the false.

(5) Matth. xvii. 20.

Church,

Church, as it is directed and described by St. James (6) : and by *working miracles*, a more private and extemporaneous exercise of the same power, tho' less confined in its objects (7).

PROPHECY, which comes next, plainly signifies, foretelling the future fortunes of the Church, to the comfort and edification (as St. Paul expresses it) of the Assembly. *He that PROPHESIETH speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort* (8). And these effects, generally attending the

(6) *Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let him pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of Faith [i. e. the faith mentioned just before] shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* Gen. Ep. ver. 14.

(7) The *χαρισματα ιαμάτων* properly expresses gifts belonging to the Church as such, and *ενεργήματα δυνάμεων* implies virtue residing in the individual or particular agent. Besides we may observe, *χαρισματα ιαμάτων* was a less degree of miraculous power than the *ενεργήματα δυνάμεων*, and is expressly intimated so to be v. 28.---*ἵνα δυνάμεις, ἢτα χαρισματα ιαμάτων*---

(8) 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

act of *prophecy*, in a little time assumed its name (9). But the proper sense of prophecy, and that in which (as we say) it is to be understood in this place, is the foretelling things to come; which Jesus himself declares to be one essential part of the office of the Holy Spirit. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.--and he will shew you things to come* (1).

The last of these gifts, in the order of things, as well as in the Apostle's enumeration of them, is the DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. The reputation attending the exercise of these extraordinary endowments would be a strong temptation to Impostors to mimic their powers; as we see it was by the case of Simon the Magician. It graciously pleased the Holy Spirit, therefore, to bestow, amidst these gifts, one, whose virtue it was to bring all the others

(9) As Rom. xii. 6.--1 Cor. xiii. 9.--xiv. 1, & 24.

(1) John xvi. 13.---*ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἀληθεία ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.*

to the test (2), by the virtue which the possessor of it had, of distinguishing between true and false inspiration, where accidental ambiguity or designed imposture had made the matter doubtfull or suspected.

These gifts, St. Paul tells us, were severally distributed amongst the Faithfull. But the Apostles themselves, as Scripture leads us to conclude, had them all in conjunction; exercised them in fuller measure; supported them by additional revelations (3); and (as hath been proved of one of them at least) possessed them by a more lasting title.

(2) διακρίσεις πνευμάτων---διακρίσεις is used in other places in this signification --μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν, Rom. xiv. 1.---πρὸς διακρίσιν καλῶ τε καὶ κακῶ, Heb. v. 14.---πνευμάτων, of spirits or divine afflations. And so the Author uses it, a little after, πνεύματα προφητῶν, c. xiv. 32.

(3) Now, Brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak unto you either by REVELATION, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine, 1 Cor. xiv. 6. And this additional gift of Revelation, which conveyed the further knowlege of God's

But, for a fuller account of their *nature* and their *use*, we must have recourse to SCRIPTURE itself, which contains the history of their various fruits. And as the richest of these fruits is the INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE itself, I shall select this for the subject of what I have further to say of the primitive operations of the Holy Spirit; especially as this hath, in these our *latter times*, been called in question.

We may observe that the Ministry of the first preachers of the Gospel consisted in these two parts; (1.) The temporary and occasional instructions of those Christians whom they had brought to the knowledge of, and faith in, Jesus, the Messiah (2); and the care of composing a WRITTEN RULE for the direction of the Church throughout all ages. Now it being conceded, because, by the history of *the acts of the Apostles*, it may be proved, that they were divinely inspired in the discharge of the temporary part; it must be will in the Gospel, seems properly to have been appropriated to the Apostles, with design to dignify their office.

very

very strong evidence indeed which can induce an unprejudiced man to suspect, that they were left to themselves in the execution of the other. Their preaching could only profit their Contemporaries: For instructions conveyed to future ages by tradition are soon lost and forgotten; or, what is worse, polluted and corrupted with fables. It is reasonable therefore to think, that the Church was provided with a WRITTEN RULE. The good providence of God hath indeed made this provision. And the Scriptures of the New Testament have been received by all the Faithfull, as divine oracles, as the inspired dictates of the Holy Spirit, till Superstition extending the notion of inspiration to an extravagant height, over-cautious believers joined with libertines, (who had taken advantage of that folly) to deny or bring in question any inspiration at all. For extremes beget each other; and when they have begotten, are suffered, in order to preserve the balance of the *moral system*, as frequently to support as to destroy one another; that, while they subsist, each may defeat the mischief

mischiefs which the other threatens ; and when they fall, both of them may fall together.

I shall therefore take upon me to expose the extravagance of either folly ; and then endeavour to settle the TRUE NOTION OF SCRIPTURE INSPIRATION.

I. 1. We have seen how largely gifted the Apostles were for the business of their Ministry. They worked Miracles, they spoke with Tongues, they explained Mysteries, they interpreted Prophecies, they discerned the true from the false pretences to the Spirit; and all this for the temporary and occasional discharge of their Mission. Is it possible, then, to suppose them to be deserted by this Inlightener when they sat down to the other part of work ; to frame a rule for the lasting service of the Church ? Can we believe that that Spirit, which so bountifully assisted them in their Assemblies, withdrew himself from them, when they retired to their private Oratories : or that when their speech was *with all power*, their writings should convey no more than the fallible dictates

dictates of humanity? To suppose the gifts of the Spirit to be so capriciously bestowed, would look more like a mockery than an endowment. And to believe all this would be a harder task than what, the Deist tells us, our credulity imposes on us. No candid man therefore will be backward to conclude, that what the Apostles had for the temporary use of their Ministry, they had, at least in as large a measure, for the perpetual service of the Church.

2. St. Paul, where he recommends the study of the Scriptures of the Old Testament to Timothy, expressly declares them to be inspired, in that general proposition, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* (4). Now if in the Mosaic Dispensation, the written Rule was *given by inspiration of God*, where the Church was conducted in every step, at first by Oracular responses, and afterwards by a long series and succession of Prophets; and all this under an extraordinary administration of Providence, such as might well seem to

(4) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

superfede the necessity of a scriptural inspiration; how confidently may we conclude, that the same divine goodness would give the INFALLIBLE GUIDE of an inspired Scripture to the Christian Church, where the *miraculous* influence of the Holy Spirit is supposed to have ceased with the Apostolic ages, and where the administration of Providence is only ordinary? Nor can it be said, that what St. Paul predicates of *Scripture* must be confined to the LAW, (whose very name indeed implies inspiration) and what is prefatory to it; since the largeness of his terms, *all Scripture*, extends to the whole Canon of the Old Testament, as then received by the two Churches. And this general expression was the more expedient, as the *historic* writings did not either by their nature, like the *prophetic*, or by their name, like the *legal*, necessarily imply their coming immediately from God. The Canonical books of the OLD Testament, therefore, being inspired, reason directs us to expect the same quality in the New. And, as in the *Old*, amongst several occasional writings,

things, there was the fundamental record, or the *great Charter* of the Pentateuch; and in the Volumes of the Prophets, the Oracular predictions of the future fortunes of the Church, to the FIRST coming of the Messiah; so, in the *New*, there is, besides the occasional Epistles, the authentic Record or *great Charter* of the Gospel-Covenant; and in the Revelations of St. John, the same divine predictions continued to the SECOND coming of the Saviour of the World.

3. The reason of the thing likewise supports us in concluding for this inspiration. An universal rule of human conduct implies as unlimited an obedience: the nature of such a rule requiring it to be received entire; and to be observed in every article. But when once it is supposed to come to us, tho' from Heaven yet, thro' the canal of an uninspired instrument, liable to error both in the receiving and in the dispensing of it, men would be perpetually tempted to own just as much as, and no more than, they liked to believe, or were disposed to practise; and to reject the rest.

rest as a mere human imposition. Nay the very reasons which the writers against Inspiration give us why it is not afforded, seem to shew the necessity why it should: such as the imperfect knowlege that the Apostles had of the genius of Christianity; their disputes and differences with one another; their mistakes in matters of easy prevention, tho' of little consequence, &c. for if the Composers of a *rule of faith* for the universal Church were thus naturally defective in historic and religious knowlege, What security could we have for their not misleading us in things of moment, unless prevented by the guard and guidance of the Holy Spirit, while they engaged themselves in this important task?

I am enough sensible of the weakness and folly of that kind of reasoning which concludes from *right* to *fact*; and assumes, that because a thing is imagined to be expedient, usefull or necessary, in God's moral government, that therefore he hath indeed made provision for it. Thus the Papal Doctors, in their arguments for the *standing power of Miracles* and the appointment

of an *infallible Guide*, having endeavoured to shew that the first is necessary for those *without*, and the second, for those *within*, would draw us to conclude with them, that the *true Church* hath, in fact, the exercise and use of MIRACLES and INFALLIBILITY.

But the cases are widely different. It is by no means agreed, that the Church, after the Apostolic ages, was in the possession of so large a portion of the holy Spirit as to enable either this pretended HEAD, or the MEMBERS, to exert the powers in question: whereas it is confessed by all, that at the time these Scriptures were written, the Composers of them were divinely inspired for the occasional work of the Ministry: And the only question in dispute is, Whether that Spirit which aided them in defending the Gospel before the tribunals of Kings and Magistrates (7)—in working mi-

(7) *And when they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto the Magistrates and Powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.* Luke xii.

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acles before the multitude of Unbelievers — and in prophesying and explaining Mysteries to the assemblies of the Faithful, whether this Spirit, I say, did accompany, or desert them, when they retired within themselves, to compose a RULE OF FAITH for the perpetual service of the Church?

4. But lastly, we have the clear testimony of Scripture for this inspiration. And tho' the *bearing witness to it self* (5) might be reasonably objected in an argument addressed to Unbelievers, yet being here inforced against such of the Faithfull who doubt or hesitate concerning the inspiration of the New Testament, it hath all the propriety we can desire.

I venture therefore to say, that St. Paul, in the general proposition quoted above, which affirms that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*, (6) necessarily includes the Scriptures in question; what it predicates of *all Scripture* taking in the *new* as well as *old*; as well that which was to be

(5) *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.* John v. 31.

(6) Πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος &c.

written,

Written, as that which was already collected into a Canon. For the term, *Scripture*, as the context leads us to understand it, is general, and means, a religious Rule, infallible in its direction, for the conduct of human life in belief and practice: it being under this idea that he recommends the *Scriptures* to Timothy. The assertion therefore is universal, and amounts to this, "That *divine Inspiration* is an essential quality of every *Scripture*, which constitutes the LAW or RULE of a Religion coming from God."

On the whole then, we conclude, that all the *Scriptures of the New Testament* were given by *inspiration of God*. And thus the prophetic promise of our blessed Master, that the *Comforter should abide with us forever*, was eminently fulfilled. For tho', according to the promise, his ordinary influence occasionally assists the Faithful of all ages, yet his constant abode and supreme illumination is in the sacred *Scriptures of the New Testament* (8).

(8) The late Mr. William Law, who obscured a good understanding by the fumes of the rankest en-

It remains only to be considered, In what sense we are to understand this *inspiration*?

thufiasm, and depraved a sound judgment, ftill further, by the prejudices he took up againft all Sobriety in Religion, feized the above paragraph, as he found it detached from the difcourfe in a quotation made of it, by an ingenius writer; and thus defcants upon it: “ Dr. Warburton’s doctrine is this, that the inspired books of
 “ the New Testament is the Comforter or
 “ *spirit of truth and illuminator*, which is meant
 “ by Chrift’s being always with the Church. Let
 “ us therefore put the Doctor’s doctrine into the
 “ letter of the text, which will beft fhew how true
 “ or false it is. Chrift faith, *if any man love me, my*
 “ *Father will love him, and we will come unto him,*
 “ *and make our abode with him.* That is, according to the Doctor’s theology, certain books of
 “ Scripture will come to him, and make their
 “ abode with him; for he exprefly confineth the
 “ *constant abode and fupreme illumination* of God to
 “ the holy Scriptures. Therefore (horrible to fay)
 “ God’s inward prefence, his **OPERATING POWER**
 “ **OF LIFE** and light in our fouls, his dwelling in
 “ us, and we in him, is fomething of a lower nature, that only may occasionally happen, and has
 “ lefs of God in it than the dead letter of Scripture,
 “ which alone is the *constant abode and fupreme illumination*. Miserable fruits of a paradoxical ge-

A fpurious

A spurious opinion, begotten in the Jewish Church by Superstition, and nursed up by mistaken piety in the Christian, hath almost passed into an article of Faith, "That the language of Scripture was dic-

"nius!"—*A bumble, earnest, and affectionate address to the Clergy, p. 69-70.*

This poor man, whether misled by his fanaticism or his spleen, has here fallen into a trap which his folly laid for his malice. In the discourse, from whence the paragraph so severely handled is taken, I treated distinctly of these two branches of the holy Spirit; 1. As he *illuminates the Understanding* under the title of the *Spirit of truth*. 2. As he *rectifies the Will* under the title of the *Comforter*; by the first of which, he *establishes our faith*; and by the second, he *perfects our obedience*.

Now it is under the first branch in which this obnoxious paragraph is found. So that common sense and common honesty require, that when I say, the *constant abode and supreme illumination of the holy Spirit is in the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament*, I should be understood to mean, that he is there only as the *illuminator of the understanding, the establisher of our faith*. But Mr. Law applies my words to the other branch of his office, as the *rectifier of the Will, the perfecter of obedience*; and so makes my observation nonsense in order to arraign it of impiety.

tated by the holy Spirit in such a manner that the Writers were but the passive organs thro' which every word and letter were conveyed." And as Superstition seldom knows where to stop, the Mahometans improved upon this fancy, and represent their Scriptures as sent them down from Heaven ready written. Having got into so fair a train the next theological question in honour of the Alcoran was, whether it was *created or uncreated*; and the orthodox determination, we may be sure, was in favour of the latter (9).

(9) A rabbinical hyperbole, concerning the unvariable reading of the copies of the Law, seems to have given the Mahometan Doctors a hint of this conceit concerning the physical nature of the Alcoran. Orobio speaking the language of the Rabbins says, *Liber Moſis eſt ita perfectus et purus, atque ab erroribus alienus, ab ejus conditore per tot ſecula variis in nationibus ſervatus, ut cætera naturalia quæ Deus non corruptioni expoſita creavit; ut Cæli, Sol et Aſtra, quæ a ſua formatione non majore Providentia incorrupta, ſervantur et ſubſiſtunt, quam divini legis libri, qui nunquam aliquam mutationem experti fuerunt.* *Apud Limb. p. 147.*

But.

But there are many objections to that high idea of Scripture inspiration, which piety hath adopted.

1. It would be putting the holy Spirit on an unnecessary employment; for much of these sacred Volumes being historical, and concerning facts and discourses which had fallen under the observation of the Writers, they did not need his immediate assistance to do this part of their business for them.

2. Had the Scriptures been inspired by this organical conveyance, there must have been the most perfect agreement amongst the several writers of the Gospel, in every circumstance of the smallest fact. But we see there is not this perfect agreement. In some minute particulars, which regard neither faith nor manners; neither the truth nor certainty of the history in general, the several Writers vary from one another. A variation, which, tho' it discredits the notion of an organic inspiration, yet, (which is of much more importance) supports the fidelity of the Historians; as it shews that they did not write in concert, or copy from one another; but that each described,

described the proper impressions which the same facts had made upon himself.

3. Were this the true idea of Scripture-inspiration, that the several Writers were but the mere organs of the spirit, the turn of expression had been one and the same thro'out all the sacred books written in the same language: whereas we find it to be very different and various; always corresponding to the conditions, tempers, and capacities of the Writers.

4. Lastly, the very words of Scripture must, in this case, have been preserved, thro'out all ages, perfectly pure and free from the corruptions and mistakes of transcribers. For if it were expedient, usefull and sorting with the views of divine wisdom that every word and letter should be inspired, it was equally expedient that every word and letter should be preserved uncorrupt; otherwise the holy Spirit would appear to have laboured in vain. Now general experience assures us that this is not the case: frequent transcribing hath occasioned numerous variations in words and phrases thro'out all the Scriptures of the New Testament. But tho' this opposes the
notion.

notion of organic inspiration, yet the harmless nature of the variations, which never disturb the sense, nor obscure a single proposition of faith, or precept of good manners, affords us a noble instance of the gracious providence of God, in bringing down to us those Scriptures, destined for an *infallible rule*, incorrupt and entire, in all essential and even material points; tho' after escaping the impure hands of so many factious Schismatics, outrageous Bigots, and designing Seducers, they had a long journey still to run, thro' the dark cloisters of dreaming Superstition, and of ignorance but half awake.

From all this we conclude, that the notion of organic Inspiration must needs be false: and yet we have proved it to be an undoubted truth, that the Scriptures of the New Testament were *given by the inspiration of God*.

Let us consider then, in what sense this inspiration is to be understood.---From the premises we can deduce no other than this, "That the Holy Spirit so directed the pens of these Writers that no considerable error should fall from them:--- by

--- by enlightening them with his immediate influence in all such matters as were necessary for the instruction of the Church, and which, either thro' ignorance or prejudice, they would otherwise have represented imperfectly, partially, or falsely; and by preserving them, in the more ordinary ways of providence, from any mistakes of consequence, concerning those things whereof they had acquired a competent knowledge by the ordinary way of information. In a word, by watching over them incessantly; but with so suspended a hand, as permitted the use, and left them to the guidance of their own faculties, while they kept clear of error; and then only interposing when, without this divine assistance, they would have been in danger of falling."

This seems to be the true idea of the inspiration in question. This only doth agree with all appearances; and will fully answer the purpose of an inspired writing, which purpose is to afford an INFALLIBLE RULE for the direction of the Catholic Church.

But

But it is not only the nature and genius, the state and condition of Holy Scripture, which support this idea of inspiration: The express words of its composers lead to the same conclusion. St. Peter, speaking of the Epistles of his fellow-labourer St. Paul, uses this temperate expression concerning their inspiration; he hath written to you, says he, *according to the wisdom given unto him* (1): now, as on the one hand, by the character of this *wisdom*, which is said to be GIVEN, we must conclude it to be *that wisdom coming immediately from above*; so, from this account of the Apostle's free use of it, (*the spirit of prophecy being subject to the Prophet,*) we must conclude on the other, that there was no organic inspiration, ruling irresistibly, further than in securing the writer from error and mistake.

But it may be said, that, on this moderated idea of inspiration, we shall never be able to distinguish what parts were written under the immediate influence of the Spirit,

(1) KATA τὴν αὐτοῦ ΔΟΘΕΙΣΑΝ σοφίαν.
2 Pet. iii. 15.

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and what were the product of human knowledge only. What if we shall not? Where is the mischief or inconvenience of it? while all we want to know is, that every sentence of Scripture, which but remotely concerns either faith or practice, is infallibly true. It is of little consequence to us to be instructed how or in what manner that truth came to be secured: whether by direct inspiration; or by that virtual superintendence of the Spirit, which preserved the writers of it from error. Scripture is the rule of Christian conduct; and if this rule be known to be unerring, that is all which is wanting to effectuate it's end.

And yet I am persuaded, that licentious men have been the forwarder to contend for this moderated inspiration, under the idea of a partial one, on the pleasing fancy that it would support them in believing no more than suited with their principles or their practice. But, what hath been observed on this head sufficiently exposes the vanity of all such idle contrivances to let men loose from any part of their faith or duty. For be it admitted, that this or
that

that particular doctrine or precept was not delivered under the immediate influence of the holy Spirit, but was conveyed to posterity, in the common way of history, as the writer received it from his master, yet this takes nothing at all from that certainty of truth which attends directer inspiration; since the rational idea of a partial influence implies, that the Spirit so watched over the authors of the New Testament, and so guided their pens as to admit no mixture of error, even in those parts where they discharged no more than the ordinary function of common Historians.

In a word, it imports us little to be solicitous about the Scriptural DELIVERY of Gospel truths; whether they be conveyed to us by means merely human, or by the more powerful workings of the holy Spirit, so long as we are assured that divine Providence guarded that delivery from all approach of error. But then let us observe that this is a very different thing from the ORIGINE of the truths themselves: for on this latter, the reality of our Religion, indeed, depends; the very essence of it consisting

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in this, that the doctrines which it teacheth be not only truths SIMPLY, but truths REVEALED from Heaven. And indeed, even with regard to the *delivery*, when the Writers propose any thing of *faith* or *practice*, explanatory of what their master taught, and not explicitly contained in his words, we must needs conclude, that so far forth they were under the immediate direction of the holy Spirit, who was *to teach them all things*: and this influence, the Apostle calls, *speaking by revelation* (10).

Thus we see the advantages resulting from a PARTIAL INSPIRATION as here contended for and explained. It answers all the ends of a Scripture universally and organically inspired, by producing an UNERRING RULE of faith and manners; and besides, *obviates* all those objections to *inspiration* which arise from the too high notion of it; Such as trifling errors in circumstances of small importance; for the least

(10) εἰν μὴ ὑμῶν λαλήσω ἐν ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΙ.
Cor. xiv. 6.

error

error is inconsistent with organical inspiration, but may well stand with a virtual and cooperating influence; Such again, as the various readings in the several transcripts, and the various styles amongst the several Authors of Scripture; inconsistencies which would never have been permitted, and contrarieties which could never have happened, under universal inspiration; but which are the natural and harmless consequences of the PARTIAL.

In a word, by admitting no more than this lower kind of inspiration, so warmly contended for, (and in terms as vague and indeterminate as the Scepticism of the users) by men who were in hopes that the admission of it would end in no inspiration at all, we secure and establish the infallible word of Scripture; and free it from all those embarrassing circumstances which have been so artfully and disingenuously thrown out to it's discredit.

But there is no idea of an inspired Scripture which libertine men have not perverted to serve their oblique purposes. Thus, when that of a *partial inspiration* has failed

in this service, they have tried what mischief that other of an *organic inspiration* was likely to produce. In order to this they have laid it down as a proposition not likely to be contested, "that, on this idea, the work inspired could be no other than a perfect module of eloquence, *pure, clear, noble and affecting beyond the force of common speech.*" To this, it was enough to shew, that their Principle was false; that, in the composition of sacred Scripture, there was *no organic inspiration*: and this, I presume, I have sufficiently done.

But, luckily for their purpose, there is another circumstance in the dispensation of Grace, which restores their objection, concerning *a perfect module of eloquence* to its native force. This circumstance therefore is to be considered; the use made of it fairly delivered; and the proper reasoning applied to enervate its new recovered force.

The circumstance is this: Several books of the New Testament are written by persons who acquired the knowledge of the Greek tongue by miraculous infusion, as at the day of Pentecost. Now the
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holy Ghost, say they, could not but inspire the purest Greek, and the most perfect eloquence in the use of it; whatever they wrote therefore in any future time, in this language, must needs bear these marks of its celestial birth, whether they were assisted in the composition by the holy Spirit; or whether they wrote upon the fund of their former acquired knowlege. But the language of all the books of the New Testament is utterly rude and barbarous, and favours nothing of so high an original.

The learned Person, (whose arguments against the duration of the inspired knowlege of language, on the day of Pentecost, have been considered above) lends the Libertine these arms, in his concluding argument, in support of that notion; which argument I have reserved to be considered in this place.

“ If we allow, (says he) the gift to be
“ lasting, we must conclude that some at
“ least of the books of Scripture were in
“ this inspired Greek. But (says he) we
“ should naturally expect to find an in-
F 3 “ spired

“spired language to be such as is worthy
 “of God; that is, pure, clear, noble
 “and affecting, even beyond the force of
 “common speech; since nothing can
 “come from God but what is perfect in
 “its kind. In short, the purity of Plato,
 “and the eloquence of Cicero. Now
 “(continues he) if we try the apostolic
 “language by this rule, we shall be so far
 “from ascribing it to God that we shall
 “scarce think it worthy of Man, that is, of
 “the liberal and polite; it being utterly
 “rude and barbarous, and abounding with
 “every fault that can possibly deform a
 “language. And tho’ some writers,
 “prompted by a false zeal, have attempt-
 “ed to defend the purity of the Scripture-
 “Greek, their labour has been idly em-
 “ployed (2).”

These triumphant observations are
 founded on two propositions, both of
 which he takes for granted, and yet nei-
 ther of them are true.

(2) Dr. Middleton's *essay on the gift of tongues*.
 Works, Vol. II. p. 91.

The one, That an inspired language must needs be a language of perfect eloquence.

2. The other, That eloquence is something congenial and essential to human speech. I shall shew the falsehood of both.

With regard to the first proposition, I will be bold to affirm, that were the **STYLE** of the New Testament exactly such as his very exaggerated account of it would persuade us to believe, namely, that it is *utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding with every fault that can possibly deform a language*, this is so far from proving such language not divinely inspired, that it is one certain mark of this original.

I will not pretend to point out which books of the New Testament were or were not composed by those who had the Greek tongue thus miraculously infused into them; but this I will venture to say, that the style of a writer so inspired, who had not (as these writers had not) afterwards cultivated his knowledge of the language on the principles of Grecian eloquence, would

would be precisely such as we find it in the books of the New Testament.

For, if this only be allowed, which no one, I think, will contest, that a strange language acquired by illiterate men, in the ordinary way, would be full of the idioms of their native tongue, just as the Scripture-Greek is observed to be full of Syriasm and Hebraisms; how can it be pretended by those who reflect upon the nature of language, that a strange tongue divinely infused into illiterate men, like that at the day of Pentecost, could have any other properties or conditions?

Let us weigh these cases impartially. Every language consists of two distinct parts; the single terms, and the phrases and idioms. The first, as far as concerns appellatives especially, is of mere arbitrary imposition, tho' on artificial principles common to all men: The second arises insensibly, but constantly, from the manners, customs, and tempers of those to whom the language is vernacular; and so becomes, tho' much less arbitrary, as what the Grammarians call *con-*

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gruity is more concerned in this part than in the other, yet various and different as the several tribes and nations of Mankind. The first therefore is unrelated to every thing but to the genius of language in general; the second hath an intimate connexion with the fashions, notions, and opinions of that people only, to whom the language is native.

Let us consider then the constant way which illiterate men take to acquire the knowledge of a foreign tongue. Do they not make it their principal, and, at first, their only study, to treasure up, in their memory the signification of the terms? Hence, when they come to talk or write in the speech thus acquired, their language is found to be full of their own native idioms. And thus it will continue, till by long use of the strange tongue, and especially by long acquaintance with the owners of it, they have imbibed the particular genius of the language.

Suppose then this foreign tongue, instead of being thus gradually introduced into the minds of these illiterate men, was
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instantaneously infused into them; the operation, tho' not the very mode of operating, being the same, must not the effect be the same, let the cause be never so different? Without question. The divine impression must be made either by fixing the terms or single words only and their signification in the memory; as for instance, Greek terms corresponding to the Syriac or Hebrew; or else, together with that simple impression, another must be made to enrich the mind with all the ideas which go towards the composing the phrases and idioms of the language so inspired: But this latter impression seems to require, or rather indeed implies, a previous one, of the tempers, fashions, and opinions of the people to whom the language is native, upon the minds of them to whom the language is thus imparted; because the phrase and idiom arises from and is dependent on those manners: and therefore the force of expression can be understood only in proportion to the knowledge of the manners; and understood they were to be;

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the Recipients of their spiritual gifts being not organical canals, but rational Dispensers. So that this would be a waste of miracles without a sufficient cause; the Syriac or Hebrew idiom, to which the Disciples were enabled of themselves to adapt the words of the Greek or any other language, abundantly serving every usefull purpose, all which centered in the giving CLEAR INTELLIGENCE. We conclude, therefore, that what was thus inspired was the TERMS, and that grammatic congruity in the use of them, which is dependent thereon. In a word, to suppose such kind of inspired knowledge of *strange tongues* as includes all the native peculiarities, which, if you will, you may call their *elegancies*; (for the more a language is coloured by the character and manners of the native users, the more elegant it is esteemed) to suppose this, is, as I have said, an ignorant fancy, and repugnant to reason and experience.

Now, from what hath been observed, it follows, that if the style of the New
F 6 Testament

Testament were indeed derived from a language divinely infused on the day of Pentecost, it must be just such, as to its style, which, in fact, we find it to be; that is to say, Greek words very frequently delivered in Syriac and Hebrew idiom.

The conclusion from the whole is this, that a *nominal* or *local* barbarity of style, (for that this attribute, when applied to style, is no more, will be clearly evinced under our next head) is so far from being an objection to its miraculous acquisition that it is one mark of such extraordinary original.

But the learned writer is so perfectly satisfied that this *barbarity* of style which claims the title of inspired, is a sure mark of imposture, that he almost ventures to foretell, it will prove the destruction of those pretensions, as it did to the *Delphic Oracles*. The parallel, he thinks is *curious*; and so do I; therefore the reader shall have it just as he descants upon it. “ It is somewhat *curious* to observe, “ that there was a controversy of the same “ kind amongst the Ancient Heathens concerning

cerning the style and composition of the
Delphic Oracles. For as those Oracles
 were delivered in verse, and the verses
 generally rude and harsh, and offending
 frequently both in the exactness of meter
 and propriety of language, so men of
 sense easily saw that *they could not be in-*
spired by the Deity: others, on the con-
 trary, blinded by their prejudices,
 or urged by their zeal, to sup-
 port the credit of the popular supersti-
 tion, constantly maintained, that the
 verses were really beautifull and noble,
 and worthy of God; and that the con-
 trary opinion flowed from a false delicacy
 and sickly taste, which relished no
 poetry, but what was soft and sweet;
 and breathing nothing, as it were, but
 spices and perfumes. The dispute how-
 ever seems to have been compounded,
 and a distinction found, in which all par-
 ties acquiesced, by allowing *some sort of*
inspiration, and divine Authority to the
matter of the Oracle, but leaving all the
 rest to *the proper talents and faculties of*
the Prophets: who being tired at last

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“with the continual labour of versifying,
 “began to utter her Oracles in prose, till
 “the whole imposture fell by degrees into
 “an universal contempt, and so finally ex-
 “pired (1).”

A sad story! But, happily, the essential differences between the pretensions of these Oracles to inspiration, and the pretensions of the Christian Evangelists, all of which the learned Writer has thought proper to overlook, will ease us of our fears; for any one of them is sufficient to shew, that tho’ the objection may hold good against these heathen Oracles, yet it has not the least force against Scripture inspiration.

1. First then the *Delpbic Oracles* were supposed to proceed from the fabled *God of verse*, who having, according to the popular opinion, inspired his *Poets* as well as *Prophets*, there was, in the writings of the most authentic of the former, a model of divine eloquence, on which the pretensions of the latter might be estimated. But scripture inspiration professedly came from

(1) *Essay on the gift of tongues*, Vol. II. of Middleton’s Works, p. 91-2.

‡ Deity who has declared that *his thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways his ways. For as the heavens are higher than the Earth, &c. (2).*

2. The Delphic Oracles were delivered in *verse or measure*; for the composition of which there were established rules, formed on the writings of the ancient poets: when therefore this species of eloquence was employed by the Delphic Prophetess, if she conformed not to the established rules, but *offended against the meter*, which her God originally inspired, she might be fairly adjudged an impostor. But the inspired Penmen disclaimed all models of human eloquence, and *the enticing words of man's wisdom.*

3. The Delphic Prophetess was a *mere organ*, her Prophecies being delivered in a fit of extacy, when the *presence* of the God was supposed to obliterate all the impressions of human ideas, so that every iota was to be placed to the account of the inspiring God. But it was just otherwise with such

(2) Isaiah, lv. 8 9.

as were actuated by the holy Spirit: These, in the very moments of inspiration, still retained the free use of themselves, and continued masters of their rational and persuasive faculties; *the Spirits of the Prophets* (as St. Paul informs us, who spoke from his own experience) *being subject to the Prophets* (2)! The Pagan Zealots therefore plainly prevaricated, when, to cover the imposture of the *Delphic Oracle*, they compromised the matter with their adversaries, *by allowing some sort of inspiration, and divine authority, but leaving all the rest to the proper talents and faculties of the Prophetess*. But the Defenders of our holy Religion, when they say the same thing in defence of sacred Scripture, do not prevaricate; they advance a reasonable and consistent hypothesis, which, in an examination of the present state of the books of the New Testament as transmitted down to us from the earliest antiquity, I have shewn to be actually supported by fact.

On the whole then, we need not be too much alarmed at the hint which the

(2) 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

learned writer hath here given us of the fate of the *Delphic Oracles*, tho' never so kindly intended; — *The Prophetess* tired at last with the continual labour of versifying, began to utter her oracles in PROSE, till the whole imposture fell by degrees into an universal contempt, and so finally expired; I say we need not be much alarmed, because our Oracles have nothing in common with the *Delphic*; and because the disgrace brought upon these was derived neither from their *bad verse* nor *barbarous prose*, but from very different causes, which the learned person either did not know, or at least did not care that his Reader should.

In a word, there is but one single mark of resemblance in all this ostentatious parallel; and that does not lie between the Pagan and Christian Oracles, but between their Defenders; who, with equal indiscretion, contended for purity, elegance, and beauty of style, where in one case it was not to be found, tho' pretended to; and in the other, neither pretended to, nor found. The defenders of the *Delphic Oracles* he thus describes, *that, blinded by their prejudices, or*

urged by their zeal to support the credit of their popular superstition, they constantly maintained, that the verses were really beautiful and noble, and worthy of God; and that the contrary opinion flowed from a false delicacy, and sickly taste, which relished no poetry, but what was soft and sweet, and breathing nothing but spices and perfumes. The Defenders of Scripture eloquence he had before represented in this light. — And tho' some Writers, prompted by a false Zeal, have attempted to defend the purity of Scripture-Greek, their labours have been idly employed.

Nothing, indeed is more certain. Their labours have been very idly employed. One common delusion has misled the zealous defenders of all Religions on this head, not only the *Pagan* and the *Christian*, but the *Mahometan* likewise. And here let me observe, what is well worth our notice, that that common imbecillity of the human mind, (when blundering in the obscure of superstition, or in the blind blaze of fanaticism) which leads the professors of all Religions into the same specific absurdities of the marvellous, tho' without imitating one another, has generally been more successfull in the
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support of false religion than of the true. Of this I have occasionally given divers instances elsewhere. One of them, which I just now chanced to mention, will deserve to be explained. The Mahometan Doctors were (with their master) under this common delusion, that an inspired writing must needs be a perfect model of eloquence. And they succeeded better than the Christian, for they had advantages which our Zealots had not. For first, Mahomet himself delivered the Alcoran to his followers under this character; and defied the Masters of human eloquence to match it; whereas the Writers of holy Scripture disclaim all these fantastic advantages. Secondly, when Mahomet retailed his Alcoran, there was no acknowledged model of Arabic eloquence; but when the books of the New Testament were composed, there were many, and of the greatest authority; so that those bold pretensions easily obtained, and soon smoothed the way for it's actually becoming such a model. Lastly, Enthusiasm, which had just done much greater things, easily induced the Saracens to believe, that they saw what their Prophet so confidently

sidently objected to their admiration, an all-perfect model of eloquence in the Chapters of the Alcoran. And they believed so long till the book became in fact, what at first they had only fancied it, as real and substantial a model of eloquence as any whatsoever; a paradox, that like many others, which I have had the odd fortune to advance, will presently be seen to be only another name for Truth. But here in the North-west, our enthusiasm is neither so exalted, nor our habits so constant. We have neither the knack of persuading ourselves so readily, nor the humour of sticking to a fashion, so obstinately.

However foolish then our *false Zealots* have shewn themselves in attempting to defend the purity of the Scripture Greek, it little became the learned writer, of all men, to make them the subject of his derision; since the *same false principle*, which betrayed them into one extreme, hath misled his learned self into another. The principle, I mean, (and it has misled many besides) is that which lays it down for truth, *That an inspired Scripture must be a model of perfect eloquence.* And

And this brings me to the learned writer's *second* proposition, which I promised to examine; and on which the principle, here delivered, is founded. It is this,

2. That eloquence is something congenial and essential to human speech; and inherent in the constitution of things.

This supposes, that there is some certain ARCHETYPE in nature, to which that quality refers, and on which it is to be formed and modeled. And, indeed, admitting this to be the case, one should be apt enough to conclude, that when the Author of Nature condescended to inspire one of these plastic performances of human art, he would make it by the exactest pattern of the *Archetype*.

But the proposition is false and groundless. Eloquence is not congenial or essential to human speech, nor is there any Archetype in nature to which that quality refers. It is accidental and arbitrary, and depends on custom and fashion: It is a mode of human communication which va-

rys with the varying climates of the Earth; and is as inconstant as the genius, temper and manners of it's much diversified inhabitants. For what is PURITY but the use of such terms, with their multiplied combinations, as the interest, the temper, or the caprice of a Writer or Speaker of Authority hath preferred to it's equals? What is ELEGANCE but such a turn of idiom as a fashionable fancy hath brought into repute? And what is SUBLIMITY but the application of such images, as arbitrary or casual connexions, rather than their own native grandeur, have dignified and enobled? Now ELOQUENCE is a compound of these three qualities of speech, and consequently must be as nominal and unsubstantial as it's Constituent parts. So that that mode of composition, which is a model of *perfect eloquence* to one nation or people, must appear extravagant or mean to another. And thus in fact it was. Indian and Asiatic Eloquence were esteemed hyperbolic, unnatural, abrupt and puerile to the more phlegmatic inhabitants of Rome and Athens. And the Western Eloquence

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in it's turn, appeared nerveless and effeminate, frigid or insipid to the hardy and inflamed Imaginations of the East. Nay, what is more, each species, even of approved eloquence, chang'd it's nature with the change of clime and language; and the same expression, which, in one place, had the utmost *simplicity* had, in another, the utmost *sublime* (3).

(3) Longinus reading these words in the Septuagint, *God said, Let there be light: and there was light*, and regulating his ideas on the genius of his own language, very acutely gave them as an example of the *sublime*. We may be sure the judgment of so accomplished a Critic, would be eagerly laid hold on by the Doctor's *zealous Divines*, to exalt the credit of Moses's elocution. Indeed, the sublime introduction to the book of Genesis passed, for a long time, unquestioned. At length Huetius and Le Clerc, more carefully attending to the original text, discovered that the words were so far from being *sublime*, that they were of the utmost *simplicity*; and each of these Critics composed a long dissertation to support his opinion. So far was well; but not content with what they had done, they would needs prove that Longinus was mistaken in his criticism of the Greek. This provoked the Poet Boileau, who had just translated that celebrated work, to support

Apply

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Apply all this to the Books of the New Testament, an authoris'd, collection

his Author's judgment; and (as he was in the same delusion with his adversaries) he did it by endeavouring to prove the sublime of the original expression. This furnished matter for answers and replies in abundance: Whereas, had the disputants but reflected, that the same expression, which in one language was highly *sublime*, might, in another, be extremely *simple*, the judgment of the Greek critic would have been confessed by Huetius and Le Clerc, and the biblical knowledge of these two learned Interpreters allowed of by Boileau. As the reason of all this serves to illustrate what is here advanced concerning *the nature of eloquence*, it may be worth while, tho' by lengthening a long note, to endeavour to explain it. The ideas arising from knowledge of the true God, and his attributes, were familiar to Moses; and whenever ideas are familiar they raise no emotion; consequently the expression of such ideas will naturally be cold and simple. There is the utmost simplicity in the words—*God said, Let there be light, and there was light*: And nothing but their simplicity would be seen or felt by a Jewish Reader, to whom the same religious ideas were equally familiar. But let a Greek, brought up and educated in the groveling and puerile notions which their national Theology produced and professedly

professedly designed for the rule and direction of all mankind. Now such a rule required that it should be inspired of God. But inspired writing, the Objectors say, implies the most *perfect eloquence*. What human model then was the Holy Ghost to follow? And a human model, of arbitrary construction, it must needs be, because there was no other: Or if there were another, it

supported; let such a one, I say, raise himself with pain, by the strong effort of a superior genius,

“To the first Good, first Perfect, and first Fair,” the new ideas, with which his mind is warmed and enlarged by the knowledge of the true God and his Attributes naturally produce admiration; and admiration in a Genius, is the parent of *sublime* expression. So that when the subject is Creation, his point will be to convey the highest idea of Omnipotence: but the effect of divine power, immediately following its volition, gives that highest idea: therefore, in the midst of his sublime conceptions, he will hardly think of any other words to convey them than—*God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* And every greek Reater, to whom the ideas of true Theology were as novel and unfamiliar as they were to the Writer, would naturally esteem that expression, which so graphically describes the instantaneous product of Omnipotence, to be infinitely **SUBLIME.**

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would never suit the purpose, which was to make an impression on the minds and affections; and this impression, such an eloquence only as that which had gained the popular ear, could effect. Should therefore the *eastern* eloquence be employed? But this would be too inflated and gigantic for the *West*. Should it be the *Western*? But this would be too cold and torpid for the *East*. Or suppose the *generic* eloquence of the more polished Nations was to be preferred, Which *species* of it was to be employed? The rich exuberance of the Asiatic Greeks, or the dry conciseness of the Spartans? The pure and poignant ease and flowing sweetness of the Attic modulation, or the strength and grave severity of the Roman tone? Or should all give way to that African torrent, which arose from the fermented mixture of the dreggs of Greece and Italy, and soon after overflowed the Church with theological conceits in a sparkling luxuriance of thought, and a sombrous rankness of expression? Thus various were the species's! all as much decried by a different Genus, and each as much disliked by a different Species, as the eloquence of the remotest East and West, by one another. But

But it will be said; Are there not some more general principles of eloquence, common to all?—Without doubt, there are.—Why then should not these have been employed, to do credit to the Apostolic inspiration? For good reasons; respecting both the Speaker and the Hearers. For what is eloquence but a persuasive turn given to the elocution to supply that inward, that conscious persuasion of the Speaker, so necessary to gain a fair hearing? But the first preachers of the Gospel did not need a succedaneum to that inward conscious persuasion! And what is the *end* of eloquence, even of these general principles, but to stifle reason, and inflame the passions? But the propagation of Christian Truths indispensably requires the aid of reason, and requires no other human aid. And Reason can never be fairly and vigorously exerted but in that favourable intervall which preceeds the appeal to the passions. These were the causes which forced the Masters of eloquence to confess, that the utmost perfection of their art consists in keeping it concealed; for that the ostentation of it seemed to indicate the absence of

Truth,---*Ubiunque ars offendatur*, says the most candid and able of them all, *veritas abesse videatur* (4). Hence so many various precepts to make their most artificial periods appear artless. Now surely that was a very suspicious instrument for Heaven-directed Men, which, to preserve its credit, must pretend absence, and labour to keep out of sight.

What, therefore, do our ideas of fit and right tell us is required in the *Style* of an universal Law? Certainly no more than this---To employ those aids which are common to *all* Language as such; and to reject what is peculiar to *each*, as they are casually circumstanced. And what are these aids but **CLEARNESS** and **PRECISION**? By these, the mind and sentiments of the Composer are intelligibly conveyed to the Reader. These qualities are essential to language, as it is distinguished from jargon: they are eternally the same, and independent on custom or fashion. To give a language *clearness* was the office of

(4) Quint. l. ix. c. 3.

Philosophy; to give it *precision* was the office of Grammar. Definition performs the first service by a resolution of the ideas which make up the terms; Syntaxis performs the second by a combination of the several parts of speech into a systematic congruity: these are the very things in language which are least positive, as being conducted on the principles of Logic. Whereas, all besides, from the very power of the elements, and signification of the terms, to the tropes and figures of Composition, are arbitrary; and, what is more, as these are a deviation from those principles of logic, they are frequently vicious. This, the great Master, quoted above, freely confesseth, where speaking of that ornamented speech, which he calls *ῥήματα λειξεως*, he makes the following confession and apology---“*esset enim omne Schema*
“*VITIUM, si non peteretur, sed accide-*
“*ret. Verum auctoritate, vetustate, con-*
“*suetudine, plerumque defenditur, sæpe*
“*etiam RATIONE QUADAM. Ideoque*
“*cum sit a simplici rectoque loquendi*

“*genere deflexa, virtus est, si habet PROBABILE ALIQUID quod sequatur* (5).

Now these qualities of *clearness* and *precision*, so necessary to the communication of our ideas, eminently distinguish the Writers of the New Testament; insomuch that it might be easily shewn, that whatever difficulties occur in the sacred Volumes, they do not arise from any imperfection in the mode of conveying their ideas, occasioned by this local or nominal *barbarity of Style*; but either from the sublime or obscure nature of the things conveyed to the Reader by words; or from the purposed conciseness of the Writer; who, in the occasional mention of any matter unrelated, or not essential to, the Dispensation, always affects a studied brevity.

But further, Suppose that, in some cases, an authentic Scripture, designed for a religious rule, demanded this quality of local eloquence; (for that, in general, it is not required I have fully shewn above) let this, I say, be supposed, yet still it would

(5) Quint. l. ix. c. 3.

not affect the case in hand, since it would be altogether unsuitable to the peculiar genius of the GOSPEL. It might easily be known to have been the purpose of Providence, (tho^t such purpose had not been expressly declared,) that the Gospel should bear all the substantial marks of it's divine Original; as well in the circumstances of it's promulgation, as in the course of it's progress. To this end, the appointed Ministers of it's conveyance were persons, mean and illiterate, and chosen from amongst the lowest of the people: that when Sceptics and Unbelievers saw the World converted by the *foolishness of preaching*, as the learned Apostle, in great humility, thinks fit to call it, they might have no pretence to ascribe the success, to the parts, the station, or the authority of the Preachers. Now had the language, infused into these illiterate men, been the sublime of Plato or the eloquence of Tully, Providence would have appeared to counteract it's own measures, and defeat the purpose best calculated to advance it's glory. But *God is wise, tho' man's a fool*. And the course of his Wisdom was here,

as every where else, uniform and constant. It not only chose the weakest Ministers of his Will, but kept out of their hands that powerfull weapon of *contorted words*, which their Adversaries might so easily have wrested to the dishonour of the Gospel. So much was Dr. Middleton mistaken, when besides *clearness*, (which he might be allowed to expect) he supposes *purity*, *nobleness*, and pathetic *affection* to be qualities inseparable from an inspired writing. St. Paul who, amongst these simple Instruments, was, for the same wise purposes, made an exception to the general choice, yet industriously prosecuted that sublime view, for the sake of which, the choice was made; by rejecting all other weapons but those of the Spirit, to spread abroad the Conquests of the Son of God. *My speech* (says he) *and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power.* As much as to say, "My success was not owing to the sophistical eloquence of Rhetoricians, but to the supernatural powers, with which I was endowed, of interpreting Prophecies and working

working Miracles." He subjoins the reason of his use of these means---*that their faith should not stand in the Wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* i. e. Be converted not by force of Philosophy and eloquence, but of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit: *Therefore* (saith he again) *God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise; and the weak things of the World to confound the mighty* (6). And lest it should be said, that this was an affectation of despising advantages which they themselves could not reach, it pleased Providence that this declaration should be made, not by one of the more sordid and idiotic of the number; but by Him, to whom both nature and discipline had given powers to equal even the heights of Greek and Roman elocution. For we see, by what now and then accidentally flames out in the fervor of his reasoning, that he had a strong and clear discernment, a quick and lively imagination, and an extensive and intimate acquaintance with those Mas-

(6) 1 Cor. ii. 4.

ters in moral painting, the Greek Sophists and Philosophers: all which he proudly sacrificed to the glory of the *everlasting Gospel*. Nor does he appear to have been conscious of any inconsistency between an *inspired language* and its *local barbarity of style*: For having had occasion, in this very Epistle, to remind the Corinthians of the abundance of spiritual grace bestowed upon him, he says, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all* (7); and yet he tells them that he is *rude in speech* (8). Which apparent inconsistency the reader may accept, if he pleases, for a further proof of the truth of what has been above delivered, concerning the natural condition of an inspired language.

Thus we see, how unsuitable this quality of *local eloquence* would be to the peculiar genius of the Gospel. Yet as there is much of this ornament of style, and more imagined to be than there is, in some books of the Old Testament, it may

(7) 1 Cor. xiv. 18. (8) 2 Cor. xi. 6.

not be improper to explain the reason of it, and shew the consistency of it's use there, with the principles already laid down.

1. First, then we may observe that Judaism was not an *universal* Religion, but was instituted for the use of a single people; so that none of the inconveniencies mentioned above of a *local eloquence*, could arise from the use of it in that Religion.

2. The Jewish Religion had a *public part* (9); and consequently it abounded with Rites and Ceremonies; to which part, an ornamented style was very suitable.

3. The subjects of several of the Books of the Old Testament are in their nature *poetical and rhetorical*, and so seem to have demanded a Style conformable to their genius.

And now enough hath been said to make a just estimate of the value of those objections which two celebrated writers (10) have inforced with all their art and ad-

(9) See Div. Leg. B. V. (10) Dr. Middleton and Lord Shaftsbury.

dress against the inspiration of the New Testament, from it's local barbarity of style. Dr. Middleton's objection hath been considered already. I shall chuse to close this first part of my discourse with an examination of that still more ingenious objection of the noble Author of the CHARACTERISTICS; who hath employed all the powers of his wit and eloquence to expose the want of these qualities in the sacred Volumes.

— “ It is NO OTHERWISE (says his Lordship) in the grammatical art of Characters and PAINTED SPEECH than in the art of painting itself. I have seen, in certain Christian Churches, an ancient piece or two, affirmed, on the solemn faith of priestly tradition, to have been angelically and divinely wrought by a supernatural hand and sacred pencil. Had the piece happened to be of a hand like Raphael's I could have found nothing certain to oppose to the tradition. But having observed the whole *Style* and manner of the pretended heavenly workmanship, to be so indifferent as to vary

“ in

“in many particulars, from the truth of
 “art, I presumed, within myself, to beg
 “pardon of the tradition, and assert confi-
 “dently, that if the pencil had been heaven-
 “guided it could never have been so lame in
 “it’s performance; it being a mere contra-
 “diction to all divine and moral truth,
 “that a celestial band, submitting itself to
 “the rudiments of a human art, should
 “sin against the art itself, and express
 “falsehood and error instead of justness
 “and proportion (1).”

This tale of *St. Luke’s painting*, like the story of the DELPHIC ORACLES, needs no application. Every one sees that it is given in discredit of the inspiration of holy Scripture. But as confidently as he says, he draws his conclusions from it, he gives them no other support than this mistaken conceit, which he erects into an axiom. *That it is no otherwise in the grammatical art of characters and painted speech than in the art of painting itself:* or, in other words, that the painted speech

(1) *Charact.* viii. p. 230.

which represent ideas, and the *painted images of things* are performances of the same kind. Now, in examining their natures by the principles of human speech, before laid down and explained, it appears that they are of very different kinds, having nothing in common but the office of giving information, *truly* and *clearly*, one of them by representing the images of corporeal things; the other by representing the incorporeal ideas of the speaker's or writer's mind. And what thing is there, in art or nature, which does not hold something in common with another? The difference between *these* is indeed no less than between things NATURAL and things POSITIVE, between constitutional and arbitrary; *painting* being IMITATION, and WORDS only SYMBOLS. The subject of the *first*, constant, unvariable, necessary; as having it's archetype in nature: the other unstable, shifting and capricious, as depending for it's existence on the human will, under the direction of fancy and caprice. In PAINTING there is, properly speaking, but *one true style*, and that is an exact imitation of nature. In SPEECH
there

there are as many true styles as there are tempers and humours, customs and fashions amongst men. Eloquence, or *truth of style*, in speaking or writing, being nothing else but the adapting the terms of human speech to the various conceptions, fancies, and affections of the hearers; so that, as in *painting*, there is but one true style, and that REAL, because an imitation of nature; In *speech* there are many true styles, but all FANTASTIC, because all are the creatures of arbitrary fashion.

The noble Author himself seemed to suspect that these two things had but a slender connexion in *nature*, and therefore endeavoured to strengthen the tie by *art*. Hence his figurative expressions of *painted speech*, for writing; and, on the contrary, *style*, for manner of painting. A favourable Critic may possibly say, that the noble Writer had no other purpose, in the use of these figures, than to ornament his language. Perhaps not. It is then only a remarkable example of the truth of an observation made above: "that the principal end of eloquence, as it is employed in human affairs,

is to mislead reason, and to cajole the fancy and affections.

On the whole then, What conclusion are we to draw from this noble Author's remarks on HEAVENLY WORKMANSHIP in *painting* and in *speech*? This certainly, and nothing more, That if an inspired Painter were to give us a picture, it would indeed equal or excell the pencil of Raphael; because here was a *real Archetype* to work by, that is to say, NATURE: But, if we may give credit to the dictates of Reason, which I am sorry to say, are not always those of his Lordship, an inspired Writer would receive no more assistance in expression, from Heaven than what was necessary to give his speech the essential qualities of all language, namely, CLEARNESS and PRECISION; because here was no *real archetype* to follow; the various modes of rhetoric being mostly fantastic, and having no existence but in capricious custom; and therefore unworthy the notice of a divine Inspirer.

I have now gone thro' the first part of my Discourse; which proposed to consider the

the office and operations of the holy Spirit as **THE GUIDE OF TRUTH**, who clears and enlightens the Understanding. In this part, I have endeavoured to vindicate his inspiration of Scripture; I have distinguished the mode of that inspiration; I have explained the character of an inspired language; I have inquired into the nature of human eloquence, and have carefully examined the force of our free Reasoners, on every one of these distinct heads.

II.

I now proceed to the second branch of my Discourse, which is, to consider the Holy Spirit under the idea of **THE CÔM-FORTER**, who purifies and supports the Will.

And here, his divine power manifested itself in the same miraculous Operations. Sacred Antiquity is very large and full in it's accounts of the sudden and entire change made by the holy Spirit, in the dispositions and manners of those whom it had enlightned; instantaneously effacing all their evil habits, and familiarizing their

practice to the performance of every virtuous and pious action.

To this illustrious and triumphant conviction of the truth of Christianity, the very enemies and persecutors of our holy Faith have been forced to bear witness: not only in the serious accounts which some (2) of them have given of the innocence and virtue of PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY; but even in the mockery and ridicule of others (3), on the subject of the boasted virtue of water-baptism; which was then commonly accompanied with, and sometimes preceded by, these extraordinary effusions of grace from the *Comforter*. "Come here (say these unhappy Libertines) and see the amazing efficacy of Christian-baptism! whoever is immersed in this water, tho' before, he were an adulterer, a practised thief or murderer, rises cleansed and purified from all his crimes; and commences, on the instant, a life of temperance, of justice, and of charity. Thus did these

(2) Pliny the younger, Suetonius, Tacitus, &c.

(3) Celsus, Julian, &c.

impious

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impious scorners endeavour to disguise their chagrin at the triumphs of the Spirit over vice and paganism, by a sarcastic parody of the gratefull exultations of the Christian Pastors. In truth, it was all they had to say; for, after this, they were reduced to seek a forced consolation, in the possibility that some NATURAL CAUSE had produced so extraordinary a phænomenon.

It may be worth while, therefore, to enquire whether any such cause can be reasonably assigned.

The enemies of our Faith hope to find it in FANATICISM, and SUPERSTITION, the two passions which the strong impression of a *new* Religion begets, by it's HOPES and FEARS, on the mind of man.

Let us see, whether either, or both of these, will account for so *sudden* and *lasting* a conversion, from vice and corruption, to a life of sanctity and virtue.

SUPERSTITION, which only depraves the Reason without making any impression on those faculties of the mind that most incline the Will to a new bias, never affects any considerable change in the MANNERS.

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It's utmost force is but just enough to persuade us that an exact attention to the ceremonious offices of Religion will be sufficient to secure us from the evils denounced against vice and immorality; or, at least, that some transient acts of penitence, as the period of human life approaches, will be of force to intitle us to the rewards of a pure and virtuous life.

FANATICISM, indeed, shakes and agitates the mind with greater violence: and by instigating those faculties which most influence the Will, frequently forces the Manners from their bent; and sometimes effaces, or obscures, the strongest impressions of custom and nature. But this extraordinary fervour, tho' always violent, is rarely, lasting: never so long as to establish the new System into a habit. So that when it's rage subsides, as it very soon does, but where it drives the unhappy victim into downright madness, the late impressed bias on the Will keeps abating till all the former habitudes recover their relaxed tone.

This is confirmed not only by the general History of past Fanaticism, but likewise
of

of the present, where we commonly see the final issue of a sudden conversion to be, either a return to an open profligacy of manners, or a deep hypocritical dissimulation of them.

But now if we look into the history of those early Converts, we shall find that their Virtue, from the very first impression of it, had all the ease, sobriety, and moderation of a settled habit: in this they persevered; and adding *grace to grace*, they went on, thro' life, in one constant tenor, from the first baptismal profession of their faith by water, to the last awfull confirmation of it in their blood. A dreadfull period! when Nature, by the very shock, and in the struggle, it then suffers, becomes enabled to dissipate all the fumes of *mental*, as it is frequently observed to do, of *corporeal* intoxication. This it did, in the famous case of the virtuous SAVANAROLA of Florence; whose story is so finely told by Guicciardini in the second and third books of his History. This Man, a genuine Fanatic, if ever there were any, had assumed the personage of a Prophet and inspired

spired Preacher. A Character (taken up amidst the distresses and distractions of his country, and, without doubt, occasioned by them) which he had long and successfully sustained - But losing his credit in the new Revolutions of Italy, and being brought by his enemies to the stake, he died, after having on the Rack disavowed his pretensions; he died, I say, fullen and silent, without any remaining symptom of his former Enthusiasm.

Nor could this sudden conversion of the first Christians be the effect of MERE rational conviction. We know it to be morally impossible for Reason, however refined and strengthened by Philosophy, to root out, on the instant, the inveterate habits of Vice. All that this magisterial Faculty can do is, by constantly repeating her dictates, and inforcing her conclusions, gradually to win over the Will; till, by little and little, the mind accustoms itself to another set of ideas, productive of other practices and other habits. A work of time and labour! as those good men have sufficiently experienced, who on a mere rational

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conviction, have attempted and perfected a change in their lives and manners. When therefore we see the deepest impressions of evil custom, and the darkest stains of corrupted nature thus suddenly wiped out and effaced, To what must we ascribe so total a reform but to the all-powerful operation of Grace?

But it may be objected, "That there are instances where Enthusiasm alone hath kept men steady in the practice of that virtue which a certain fanatic turn of mind first recommended. Doubtless there have been many good people, who either thro' the weakness of their reason, or the force of their more refined passions have been hurried into fanatic fervours, which have supported and confirmed them in their previous innocence of manners. But even here we have sufficient marks to distinguish these better sorts of enthusiasts, from such of the first christian confessors, who were in the happy circumstance of being *found* innocent, when they were led into the practice of all virtue by the holy Spirit: whose office, as we have said,

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consisted in this gracious combination, to enlighten the understanding, and to rectify the will. Now, that genial splendour which conducted the first Christians into the knowlege of *all truth*, sufficiently disclosed the divine Inspirer of *all righteousness*. But we see none of that *shining light* ordained to gild the *good works* of Grace, in the morals of innocent Enthusiasts. On the contrary, we often find a more than ordinary ignorance; and sometimes, even an incapacity of making rational conclusions.

Thus was the first part of the promise to *send the COMFORTER*, fulfilled.

The other part, that HE SHOULD ABIDE WITH US FOR EVER, comes next to be considered. We have observed how this likewise hath been verified by the sure deposite of the *Spirit of Truth* in sacred Scripture. Yet this is not the whole of the completion. His present influence, together with the fruits of the past, make the entire subject of the promise. Hence we conclude that he abides with *the Church for ever* as well PERSONALLY in his office of *Comforter*,

Comforter, as VIRTUALLY in his office of *Enlightener*.

The only question will be, Whether, from the primitive ages down to these latter times, he hath continued to exercise his office in the same extraordinary manner in which he entered upon it, when his descent on the Apostles was accompanied with all the visible marks of the Divinity.

And this, as it tends to the decision of more than one important question, not only the superstitious claim of CHURCH-MIRACLES, but the fanatic pretences to DIVINE INFLUENCES, should be considered more at large.

But here, I shall venture to invert the method of those Divines, who, in their inquiries concerning God's dispensations, endeavour to prove those supposed facts, which they have preconceived, from the *fitness* which they pretend to have discovered: that is, having determined of what is *fit* for God to do; on the credit of this, they maintain that he hath done it. On the contrary, I deem it more rational, as well as modest, first to enquire of Scrip-

ture what God hath done: and when that is known, it will be then time enough to explain the *fitness* of his doings.

Let us see now, what holy Scripture hath delivered concerning the duration of these extraordinary gifts of the holy Spirit: which, whether they rested in the recipient, and manifested themselves in *Grace and Knowledge* transcending the powers of humanity; or whether they extended outwards, in the *gifts of healing*, to the relief of their brethren's infirmities, may with equal propriety be called and be accounted **MIRACULOUS**. In the first case, the gifted person was passive; in the other, active.

Now the holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, has, I presume, determined this question for us, where, in the passage quoted before, on another occasion, he recapitulates the various prerogatives of the Apostolic age. This decisive passage may be seen, where he tells the Corinthians, that *Charity never faileth: but whether there be PROPHECIES, they shall fail; whether there be TONGUES, they shall cease; whether*

whether there be KNOWLEDGE, it shall vanish away (3).

It was the Apostle's purpose, in this chapter, to exalt *Charity* above all the other Christian graces; and therefore, having, in the preceding verses, shewn it's superiority to the rest, from it's QUALITIES and attributes; he proceeds to urge the advantage still further, from the consideration of it's DURABILITY. — *Charity never faileth.*

The question is, Whether the superior duration, here ascribed to *Charity* over *Prophecies*, *Tongues*, and *Knowledge*, respects only the progress of the Gospel HERE; or whether it extends to the completion of it, in it's triumphant state, HEREAFTER? The common opinion is, that it respects another life; supported, as should seem, by the Apostle's inforcing his argument on this observation, that *now we see thro' a glass darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then shall we know even as we are known* (4); where the different condi-

(3) 1 Cor. xiii. 8. (4) 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

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condition of the two states are plainly yet in opposition to one another.

But the other sense appears to me to be the true one; and gives us the Apostle's meaning to this effect: "The virtue of *Charity* is to accompany the Christian Church thro'out all it's stages here on Earth; whereas the gifts of *prophecy*, of strange *tongues*, of supernatural *knowledge*, are only transitory graces, bestowed upon the Church during it's infirm and infant state, to manifest it's divine birth, and to support it against the delusions and the powers of darkness.

As the words, considered in this sense, convey a most important Doctrine, viz, *the cessation of the miraculous operations of the holy Spirit after the establishment of the Christian faith*, and as this perhaps is the only express declaration of it, recorded in sacred Scripture, I shall endeavour to support my interpretation by considerations drawn from it's coherence, in this sense, and in this sense only, with what preceeds and follows in the course of the Apostle's argument.

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The Church of Corinth, tho' abundantly enriched with all divine Graces, would not yet suffer the holy Ghost to do his *perfect work* in the enlargement of the heart by universal benevolence; but, elated with SPIRITUAL PRIDE, whose property is not to bear with those who differ from us, and to despise those who are beneath us in sublime attainments, split and divided themselves into opposite sects and factions: And this unhappy situation not only rendering all their endowments vain and fruitless, but reflecting dishonour on the *Giver of all good things*, the Apostle addresses himself to expose their folly with his utmost force and vigour of reasoning.

He proves the superior excellence of *Charity* above all other spiritual graces whatsoever, both in it's QUALITIES and DURATION. The *first three verses* of his argument declare that the other graces without Charity, are neither of use nor ornament in the Christian life: The *next four verses* specify the superior qualities of Charity: and the *remaining six* (of which, the words in question make the *first*) consider Charity under

der the single advantage of it's continuance, when all those other graces, with which they were so foolishly elated, should be withdrawn. *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowlege, it shall vanish away.* In the next verse he gives the reason, *For we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* As much as to say: When that CHRISTIAN LIFE, the lines of which are marked out by the Gospel, shall, by the vital powers of CHARITY on which it is erected, arrive to it's full vigour and maturity, then those temporary aids of the holy Spirit, such as *Tongues, Prophecy, and Knowlege*, bestowed with a purpose to subdue the prejudices and septicism of those without, and to support the weakness and infirmities of those within; and given too, but imperfectly, in proportion to the defects of the human Recipients, shall, like the scaffolding of a Palace now compleated, be taken down and removed. And to shew, that the
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loss of these things will be no longer regretted when the Church hath advanced from a state of Infancy to Manhood, in the steady exercise of the CHRISTIAN LIFE OF CHARITY, he illustrates this truth by an elegant similitude. — *When I was a Child, I spake as a Child, I understood as a Child: but when I became a man, I put away Childish things.* Yet no one will be so absurd to suppose that it was the Apostle's intention to disgrace these spiritual Gifts by so low a comparison? It was the ABUSE of them only, (to which these Corinthians were so prone) that was designed to be corrected by it.

But the Apostle, having represented these extraordinary gifts to be as defective in themselves as they are contemptible in their abuse, thought fit to add, that this defect did not proceed from any penurious effluence of the holy Spirit, but from the narrowness of the human recipient; the passages to the Soul being so clogged up in this incumbrance of flesh as to be unable to convey to the sensory any more than an oblique glimpse of the sovereign Good:

But that, when we have shaken off this mortal load, and regained the regions of light and liberty, we shall then intuitively comprehend the whole Oeconomy both of NATURE and of GRACE. For now (says he) we see thro' a glass darkly (5), but then face to face:

(5) βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι—— the seeing thro', or in a glass, by or in an Enigma, seems, at first view, an odd and incongruous expression, since information by a speculum, of what kind soever, conveys the natural or real image of the reflected object, tho' that image be seen only faintly and obscurely. But an *Enigma* is not the natural image of the object conveyed, but an arbitrary mark which, under very foreign ideas, is mysteriously made to stand for the natural image. Yet, if we attend carefully to the subject, we shall find the expression to be very elegant. The Apostle is comparing the knowledge of spiritual things gained here with that knowlegewhich we shall acquire hereafter. Now all our present knowledge being conveyed thro' the Organs of Sense, the Apostle, by his ἐν αἰνίγματι, would insinuate, that our most correct and sublime ideas of spiritual things are no more the real images of spiritual things, than Enigmas or mysteriously contrived marks are the natural or real images of those things to which they are put as Signs. A glass, or speculum, is therefore used by the Apostle, in this place, to sig-

Now

the HOLY SPIRIT. 103

Now I know in part, even as also I am known. And this observation, which evidently respects a *future state*, led men to understand the Apostle as taking in another life, on which to found that superior *duration* which he gives to *Charity*, the subject of his general argument. But they seem to have mistaken the drift of his remark concerning the defects in human knowledge, which was not made as a *direct* inforcement of the argument in the eighth verse, *charity never faileth, &c;* but was an *occasional* answer to an objection, which naturally arose from his management of one of the topics in the eleventh, *when I was a Child, &c.* This, I say, seems to have been the source of the error: And yet the Apostle's concluding observation was sufficient to have set these men right, and to have shewn them, that the superior duration of Charity referred to the present life only. — *And now abideth FAITH, HOPE,*

nify the *corporeal organs*; and an *Enigma* to signify the *representative knowledge*, which the corporeal organs are only capable of producing, when employed about spiritual things.

and

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and CHARITY, *these three; but the greatest of these is Charity.* Which is in effect to say, "You may now perhaps object, that this quality of *superior duration* is not peculiar or confined to *Charity*, but belongs equally, to those two other Christian graces, *Faith* and *Hope*, which travel thro' with the Church of God, and continue to support and adorn it, in all it's revolutions here on earth, when *Prophecy*, *Tongues*, and *Knowledge* shall long have *failed* and *ceased*, and *vanished away*: So that, with regard to duration, *Faith* and *Hope* share with *Charity*, in this advantage over the other transient endowments of the Spirit." I agree, replies the Apostle, thus far to the Objection, that they are all three joint sharers in this prerogative; but still, I say, THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY: And in the beginning of my argument (says he) I have given the reason, in the observation that *Tho' I have all FAITH so that I could remove mountains, and tho' I give my body to be burned [in sure and certain HOPE of a resurrection] and have no Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* The reason:

reason is on account of the superior qualities of *Charity*: it hath those which *faith* and *hope* have not, *she seeketh not her own, &c.* as well as those which *faith* and *hope* have, and are most essential to them, for *she BELIEVETH all things, she HOPETH all things.*" It is thus the Apostle answers a concealed objection; and at the same time instructs the unwary reader with what caution and application he should come to the study of that profound reasoning with which all his Epistles abound.

But now suppose the *superior duration* of *Charity* to take in the idea of another life, How could he have said, that *faith* and *hope* had the prerogative of *remaining*, or of having an equal *abiding* with *Charity*, when both *faith* and *hope* will be swallowed up in fruition?

From the whole, then, of this account of *Charity*, it evidently appears, that THE MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE CHURCH WERE TO CEASE ON IT'S PERFECT ESTABLISHMENT; as well those which relieved corporeal, as those which administered

nistered aid to spiritual, distresses: and consequently, that SUPERSTITION and FANATICISM equally laboured under the wound inflicted on them by the hand of the Apostle, when he made this virtual Declaration of the total withdrawing of those Powers.

Here especially, all the *superstitious* and *fanatical* pretences of the Church of Rome, to supernatural powers are detected and exposed; not only the gift of INFALLIBILITY which comprehends *all Mysteries and all Knowledge*; and the work of TRANSUBSTANTIATION, which comprehends *all Faith*, not to remove, but to make, *mountains*; but likewise all the LEGENDARY MIRACLES of their Hierarchy in general, and their canonized Saints in particular. In which pretences, to observe it by the way, the blunder seems to be as glaring as the imposture: St. Paul reckons the STATE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION not to be the STATE OF MIRACLES, but that of CHARITY. *For we know in part (says he) and we prophecy in part: but*
when

when THAT WHICH IS PERFECT is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. What is *that perfect thing which was to come*; and which the Corinthians of this time so much wanted? What but that which he had so highly extolled, the State of CHARITY? So that as this advanced, the imperfect state of MIRACLES was to recede, and *be done away*. Yet in the Church of Rome, the state of their SAINTSHIP, which is *their state of perfection*, is supported by MIRACLES; while *St. Paul's state of perfection*, that of CHARITY, was so little acknowledged or understood, that one of their greatest Saints, and most abounding in *miraculous endowments*, was St. Dominic, the founder of the INQUISITION. Indeed if the Apostle's reasoning would bear this inference, that *Miracles* were not only to remain till *Charity* had done *it's perfect work*, but till it had perfectly done *it's work*, I know of no Church that has a better claim to the continued exercise of those Powers than the CHURCH OF ROME. But whatsoever need she may have, she blunders so wretchedly in her most pompous exhibitions

of them, that we may well regard ROMISH MIRACLES in the lowest rank of these *childish things*, which, the Apostle says, men and churches should be ashamed of, and *put away*, when they come to years of discretion.

Having now established the FACT, that *miraculous gifts* were to pass away with the first ages of the Church, we may safely and reasonably inquire into the FITNESS OF THE THING.

There appears to have been two causes of the extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit: The manifestation of his Mission as it was predicted; and the comfort and instruction of the Church, as it was promised.

To the first, we have observed, that in the early propagation of our holy Faith, it was fit the SANCTIFIER, as well as the REDEEMER, should support his presence by Miracles. But the same considerations which, in the one case, shew this *fitness* to be no more, shew it likewise in the other. For the DIVINE ORIGINAL of our Faith being once established, it supports itself ever after on the same credibility of hu-

the HOLY SPIRIT. III

man testimony, which all other truths do, that are founded on facts.

1. As to his extraordinary operations for the comfort and instruction of the Church, we may observe that, on his first descent upon the Apostles, he found their minds rude and uninformed; strangers to all celestial knowledge; prejudiced in favour of a *carnal Law*, and utterly averse to the dictates of the *everlasting Gospel*. The minds of these he illuminated; and, by degrees, led into all the truths necessary for the Professors of the Faith to know, or for the Propagators of it, to teach. For a *rule of Faith* not being yet composed, some extraordinary infusion of his Virtue was still necessary, both to regulate the Faith of him who received it, and to constitute the Authority of him who was to communicate, of what he had received, to others. But when now the *rule of faith* was perfected in an authentic collection of the Apostolic Writings, part of this office was transferred upon the Sacred Canon (6); and his en-

(6) See p. 39.

lightening grace was not to be expected in such abundant measure as would make the Recipients *infallible guides* to others, but only in a measure adequate to the direction of themselves.

These reasons for the change of Oeconomy, in the dispensations of the Holy Spirit, are sufficient to discredit the false confidence of modern FANATICS, who pretend to as high a degree of divine communications as if no such *Rule of Faith* was in being; or at least, as if that Rule was so obscure as to need the further assistance of the Holy Spirit to explain his own meaning; or so imperfect as to need a new inspiration to supply its wants.—But these men read the History of the dispensations to the first Propagators of our holy Faith: They look with admiration on the privileges and powers conferred on those chosen Instruments: their imagination grows heated: they forget the difference between the *present* and the *past* Oeconomy of things: they seem to feel the impressions they read of; and they assume the airs, and mimic the Authority of Prophets and Apostles.

3. Again,

2. Again, the nature and genius of the Gospel were so averse to all the religious Institutions of the world, that the whole strength of human prejudices was set in opposition to it. To overcome the obstinacy and violence of these prejudices, nothing less than the power of the *Holy One* was sufficient. He did the work of Man's Conversion; and reconciled an unbelieving world to God. At present, whatever there may be remaining of the bias of prejudice, (as such will mix it self even with our best conclusions) it draws the other way. So much then of his task was finished; and the Faith, from thenceforth had a favourable hearing. Indeed, were we to make our estimate of the present State of the religious World from the Journals of modern Fanatics, we should be tempted still to think our selves in a land of Pagans, with all their prejudices full blown upon them. For the account they give us of their provincial Missions always runs on in such strains as these — The *name of Jesus* is preached up in this City; the *glad tidings of the Gospel* conveyed to that Hamlet; a

*A Discourse concerning
new light springs up in a land of darkness;
and life and immortality is now first offered
to those who sit in the shadow of death.*

3. A further reason for the abatement of the influences of the supporting spirit of Grace is the peace and security of the CHURCH. There was a time when the Powers of this world were combined together for its destruction. At such a period, nothing but superior aid from Above could support humanity in sustaining so great a conflict as that which the holy Martyrs encountered with joy and rapture; the horrors of death in torment. But now the profession of the Christian Faith is attended with ease and honour; and the conviction, which the weight of human testimony, and the conclusions of human reason afford us, of it's truth, are abundantly sufficient to support us in our religious perseverance.

But the obstinate and continued claims of FANATICS in all Ages, to this primitive abundance of the Spirit, may make it expedient to examine their pretensions yet more minutely and exactly. And to this inquiry, Scripture it self, which fore-
saw

saw and foretold the evil, directs us to the remedy, where it exhorts us to TRY THE SPIRITS. *Beloved, believe not every spirit, (says St. John) but try the Spirits whether they be of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the World (7).* At the time this precept was given there was a more than ordinary attention requisite to guard against the delusions of false Prophets: For, the abundant effusion of the holy Spirit on the rising Religion gave encouragement to Impostors to counterfeit, and a handle to Enthusiasts to mimic, all that was equivocal in it's operations.

Hence we find that, amongst the various endowments of the primitive Church, some of which were to correct Gain-sayers, and others to edify Believers, there was one of the mixed kind, of special use to support the dignity, and to vindicate the divine original of all the rest; by detecting Impostors, who crept in amongst the truly inspired: and this we have seen the Apostle called, the DISCERNING OF SPI-

RITS. With this Gift, Peter detected Simon the Magician; and with this, Paul confounded Elymas the Sorcerer.

But when *extraordinary inspiration* itself had ceased, the false pretence to it, for some wise ends of Providence, to us unknown, still continued to infect the Church with it's impious Mummerys; And while that Virtue, (*the discerning of Spirits*) whose office was to detect them, was withdrawn with the rest of the inspired graces, the Command, *to try the Spirits whether they were of God* still remained in force. But to *try* without the faculty of *discerning* would be a dangerous; or, at best, an impertinent employment.

Now from this unreasonable task we are delivered by the gracious providence of the holy Spirit, who provided that those whom he had endowed with the gift of *discerning of Spirits* should leave behind them some Rules whereby the Faithfull of all Ages might be qualified to *try the Spirits*, and be thereby enabled to defend themselves from the seduction of error and imposture: because, says the advice,
many

many false Prophets are gone out into the World.

If the *false Prophet* pretends to a *character foretold*, then we are bid to *search the Scriptures* (8), to see if they *testify* of such a Character. Thus the *Bereans* are esteemed of more *noble* and *generous* sentiments than their Neighbours, for this very point of wisdom, *the searching the Scriptures daily to find whether those things were so* (9).

But if the *false Prophet* pretend only to some extraordinary measure of the Spirit, then we are directed to *try that Spirit* by applying to it the following Characters of real inspiration. — *The Wisdom that is from above is first pure; then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy* (10).

It is worthy our notice, that, in this rule or direction for the *trial of Spirits*, the

(8) John v. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me.* (9) Acts xvii. 11. (10) James iii. 17.

marks

marks of real inspiration are to be applied only **NEGATIVELY**: That is, we may safely pronounce, that the man in whom they are not found, hath not the Spirit of God, or *the wisdom which is from above*: while, on the other hand, we are not to conclude; that he in whom all or any of them are found, is, from this circumstance alone, endowed with any *extraordinary* measure of the holy Spirit; since they may be no other than those ordinary graces which arise from the knowlege of, and obedience to, God's Will as contained in sacred Scripture. So that altho' such a one may be truly said to be possessed of *the wisdom which is from above*, it is not that which comes to him by way of inspiration, the thing here in question.

Thus we see, the Apostle's Rule carries, in it's very nature, the evidence of it's divine original: for the assistance wanted in the *trial of Spirits*, since these extraordinary powers were withdrawn, was only such a set of Marks as was rather fitted to detect Impostors, than to assure the truth

truth of a Character not now to be expected.

This the Reader should have in mind, when we bring him to apply these marks to the features of modern Fanaticism, especially as they are seen in the famed Leader of the METHODISTS, Mr. JOHN WESLEY; for by these marks I propose to TRY, in him, chiefly, THE SPIRITS of all modern Pretenders to supernatural Powers.

And that I may not be suspected of combating a Fantom, it may be proper first of all to shew that this extraordinary man, hath, in fact, laid claim to almost every Apostolic gift and grace; and in as full and ample a measure as they were possessed of old.

But as every good Actor will first prepare his Scene, so hath he done his, and hath carried us back, by the magic of his dramatic powers, into all the wonders of the primitive Times; where we meet the Devil unchained and let loose, to exert his last efforts against the *new* Religion: As, on the other hand, to oppose to his infernal rage, we see, with the same evidence, an abundant effusion of the holy Spirit bestowed

flowed upon this *rising* Church. And now, every thing being thus prepared, both these Powers stand ready to act their parts by the time our Apostle thinks fit to appear upon the Stage.

His JOURNALS are full of the alarms which he gave the Devil, and of the mortifications which the Devil gave him.—“The Devil, says he, knew his kingdom shook, and therefore stirred up his servants to ring bells, and make all the noise they could (1).”—“The Devil’s Children fought valiantly for their Master, that his kingdom should not be destroyed: And many stones fell on my right hand and on my left (2).” “Some or other of the Children of Belial had laboured to disturb us several nights before (3).” Nay, so accustomed was he to these conflicts with the *Evil One*, that it was even matter of surprise to him, to find the Enemy, once upon a time, reserved and still; till he reflected, that it was because *his Goods were in peace*. “I preached---

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739 to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 37. (2) Do. p. 82. (3) Do. 31.

“as yet I have found only one person
 “amongst them, who knew the love of,
 “God, before my Brother came. No
 “wonder the Devil was so still: for *his*
 “*Goods were in peace* (4).” Another in-
 stance he gives us, of this peaceable con-
 vention between his Congregation and
 the Devil, is in one of his northern excur-
 sions. “Wed. 29, I preached at Durham
 “to a QUIET, STUPID Congregation (5).”
 But this never lasted long wherever he
 came; for he had always the skill of curing
 this spiritual lethargy by a frenzy.

When the Devil had set the mob on
 work, he then, like other Politicians, retired
 to better Company; such as the two Mr.
 Wesleys and the Saints. But, as this sad
 and solemn meeting was not to his taste, he
 tried to *buffet* them into a better humour.
 “I was a little surprised at some who were
 “*buffeted* of Satan in an unusual manner
 “by such a *spirit of laughter* — I knew

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20,
 1750. p. 29. (5) Journ. from July, 20, 1750.
 to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 16.

“ the same thing ten or eleven years ago.
 “ Part of Sunday my Brother and I then
 “ used to spend in walking in the meadows
 “ and singing Psalms. But one day, just
 “ as we were beginning to sing, he burst
 “ out into a *loud laughter*. I began to be
 “ very angry, and presently after to laugh
 “ as loud as he. — We were ready to tear
 “ ourselves in pieces, but were forced to go
 “ home without singing another line (6).”
 From the Head these hysteric buffet-
 ings descended, and were plentifully be-
 stowed upon, the Members. And, “ one
 “ evening (says he) such a *Spirit of laugh-*
 “ *ter* was amongst us, that many were
 “ much offended. But the attention of
 “ all was soon fixed upon poor L. — a
 “ S — ; one so violently and variously
 “ torn of the EVIL ONE did I never see
 “ before. Sometimes she *laughed*, then
 “ broke out into cursing and blaspheming,
 “ &c. (7)” On this occasion he relates a
 fact, which, tho’ He seems not to have turn-

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sep. 3,
 1741. P. 37. (7) Ibid. p. 38.

ed to a proper use, the sober and attentive Reader may.—“ Our outward trials indeed were now removed, and peace was in all our borders. But so much the more did inward trials abound, and if one member suffered, all the members suffered with it. So strange a sympathy did I never observe before: Whatever considerable temptation fell on any one, unaccountably spreading itself to the rest. So that exceeding few were able to escape it (8).” In these various struggles, the Devil was at length tired out; and Mr. Wesley forces him to betake himself to close quarters, in the bodies of friend or foe indifferently, just as he could find entertainment. And now comes on the shining part of our Apostle’s exploits, the driving him out, in the face of the whole Congregation by EXORCISMS and spiritual ejections.

But if Evil thus abounded, Grace did much more abound in this memorable

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3. 1741. p. 37.

Æra, when Mr. John Wesley first went out upon his Mission. The Spirit overcame all resistance, broke down all the strong-holds of Sin, and, what Mr. Wesley was much more set against, of INSENSIBILITY.—*Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings it once again, as of old, perfected praise; the young men saw visions, and the old men dreamed dreams; the Spirit of the Lord was gone out, and it did not stop till it had manifested itself in the last effort of it's power, THE NEW BIRTH.* “So many living Witnesses (says he) hath God given, that *his hand is still stretched out to heal, and that signs and wonders are even now wrought by his holy Child, Jesus*(9).”

“Amongst the poor Colliers at Placey, John Lane, then *nine or ten years old*, was one of the first who found peace with God. From that hour he continued to walk day and night in the light of his countenance. I saw him last year longing to be with Christ, &c (10).”---“I enquired more

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1, 1739. (10) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 18.

“parti-

“particularly of Mrs. N. concerning her
 “little Son. She said, He appeared to have
 “a continual fear of God, and an awful
 “sense of his presence; that he frequently
 “went to prayers by himself: that he had
 “an exceeding great tenderness of Con-
 “science being sensible of the least sin,---
 “A few days since he broke out into
 “prayers aloud, and then said, Mamma,
 “I shall go to Heaven soon---and you
 “will go there too, and my Pappa; but
 “you will not go so soon.” On which
 Mr. Wesley very judiciously observes,
 “When the Holy Ghost teaches, is there
 “any delay in learning? This Child was
 “then just *three years old*. A year or two
 “after he died in peace (1).”

——“I heard (says he) a surprising ac-
 “count of a young woman of Manchester
 “which I received from her own mouth,
 “She said, I was sitting in the house while
 “one read the passion hymn. I had al-
 “ways gone to Church and had never
 “heard any of the methodist preachers.

(1) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1734 to Nov. 17,
 1746. p. 133.

" On a sudden I saw our Saviour on the
 " Cross, as plain as if it had been with my
 " bodily eyes.----Then I saw as it were
 " Heaven open, and God sitting upon his
 " Throne. And I saw a large book in
 " which all my sins were written, &c. (2)"
 But this was nothing to the Vision of
 S....T...., (a girl of *ten years and three*
quarters old) which takes up between three
 and four pages in the telling ; so that part-
 ly for the length, but principally because
 I suspect Mr. J. Wesley intended it only
 for the solace of the very mob, for whose
 use this discourse is not intended, I shall
 only point to the Journal where the won-
 derful adventure is related(3). For the same
 reason I shall pass over the *Dreams* and
Visions.

All these wonders were not worked for
 nothing. They were preparatory (as we ob-
 served) to that last effort of the Spirit, THE
 NEW BIRTH: Which began in storms and
 tempests, in cries and extacies, in tumults

(2) Jour. from November 25, 1746 to July 20.
 1750. p. 94. (3) Journ. from October 27, 1743
 to November 17. 1746. p. 141. & seq.

and confusion, yet, when nature was exhausted to give way to grace, always ended in a perfect calm. But he tells us, his correspondents hearing of *this strange work* enquired of him *how can these things be?* They cautioned him *not to regard visions or dreams, or to fancy people had remission of sins because of their cries or tears, &c.* To this, he tells us, he answered, "You deny that God does now work these effects: at least that he works them in this manner. I affirm both. I have seen very many persons changed in a moment from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy, and peace.—What I have to say touching *visions or dreams* is this: I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought in a dream, or during a strong representation to the Eye of their mind, of Christ either on the Cross or in glory (4).

But here unhappily, as is usual in these matters, the symptoms of *Grace* and of *Perdition* were so interwoven and confounded

(4) Journ. from August 12, 1738: to November 1, 1739. P. 48-9.

with

with one another, that our Apostle himself is sometimes at a loss to distinguish the hand; and to determine with certainty who had the largest share in the Work, God or the Devil; insomuch that a Manichean might have greatly availed himself of this untoward circumstance. Mr. J. Wesley had been much grieved; and the Spirit of God had been grieved likewise, at the scandal given by some of his own flock who
 “blasphemed the work, and imputed it
 “either to nature or the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even to the
 “delusion of the Devil.” (5) -- “Many (says he) were deeply convinced; but none
 “were delivered from that painfull conviction. *The Children came to the BIRTH, but*
 “*there was not strength to BRING FORTH.*
 “I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the
 “jealous God by questioning his work (6).”
 Yet these pangs of the NEW BIRTH becoming, on certain occasions, more violent, and more general than ordinary, and even found to be taking and infectious, -- the Apostle himself was staggered and seemed

(5) Ibid. p. 59.

(6) Ibid. p. 68.

ready to recant. " These symptoms I can
 " no more impute to any natural cause
 " than to the Spirit of God. I make no
 " doubt it was SATAN tearing them as they
 " were coming to Christ. And hence
 " proceeded those grievous cries, whereby
 " he might design both to discredit the
 " work of God, and to affright fearful peo-
 " ple from hearing that word whereby
 " their Souls might be saved (7)." But
 since these Symptoms were universal and
 inseparable from the *new birth*, I rather
 think, and I will venture to say, as it is
 only raising the Catachresis one step higher,
 that the Devil was only acting the part of
Man-Midwife to the *new birth*. And Mr.
 Wesley himself, on second thoughts, seems
 not much averse to this conceit, as appears
 from the following relation.---" I visited
 " (says he) a poor old woman a mile or
 " two from the Town. Her trials had been
 " uncommon; inexpressible agonies of mind
 " joined with all sorts of bodily pain, not

(7) Journ. from September 3. 1741. to October
 27, 1743.

" (1)

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“ (it seemed) from any natural cause, but
 “ the *direct operation of Satan* : Her joys
 “ were now as uncommon ; she had
 “ little time to sleep, having for several
 “ months last past seen, as it were, the un-
 “ clouded face of God, and praised him
 “ day and night (8).”

Such was the EVANGELIC STATE of things
 when Mr. J. Wesley first entered on this
 Ministry : who, seeing himself surrounded
 with subjects so harmoniously disposed to
 obey the touch of a master, thus triumph-
 antly exults,---- “ Full as I was, I knew
 “ not where to begin, till my Testament
 “ opened on these words, *I came not to call*
 “ *the Righteous, but Sinners, to repentance* ;
 “ In applying which, my soul was so en-
 “ larged, that methought I could have cried
 “ out (in another sense than poor, vain
 “ Archimedes) *Give me where to stand,*
 “ *and I will SHAKE THE EARTH* (9).” A
 bravado that would have become Ignatius

(8) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to October 30,
 1751. p. 60. (9) Journ. from August 11, 1738,
 to November 1. 1739.

Loiola

Loiola himself, as the World has sufficiently experienced. How it may suit our Adventurer the World is yet to learn.

Here then was a Scene well prepared for a good Actor, and excellently fitted up for that part he was disposed to play, which, as we have said, was that of an APOSTLE. And, to do him justice, he hath exhibited it with such splendor that, of all the Apostolic gifts and graces, there is but one with which he is not adorned, viz. the gift of tongues; and as to this, the learned Mr. J. Wesley may reply with the learned Paul, *he already spoke with tongues more than they all.* For the rest, whether they were *prophecy, — supernatural aids in his ministry, — healing the sick, — casting out Devils, — or inflicting divine vengeance on his opposers,* he had them all, as we find by his journals, in the largest measure.

We will begin (as is fitting) where he himself set out, with declaring his MISSION.

“ A multitude of people got together in
“ the house, yard, and street, far more
“ than my voice could reach. I cryed a-
“ loud to as many of them as could hear,

“ All

" *All things are ready : come ye to the marri-*
 " *age.* I then DELIVERED MY MESSAGE.
 " So before ten we took boat, &c. (10)
 Yet, like Moses, he was at first a little
 mutinous. " From the directions I received
 " from God this day touching an affair of
 " the greatest importance, I could not but
 " observe the mistake of those who as-
 " sert," " God will not answer your pray-
 " er unless your heart be wholly resigned
 " to his will." " *My heart was not en-*
 " *tirely resigned to his will.* Yet I knew
 " and am assured, he heard my voice, and
 " sent forth his light and his truth (1)."

PROPHECY or *Speaking by the Spirit*, the
 first and most essential quality of a divine
 Messenger, he had at will. " We had
 " (says he) a watch night at the Cha-
 " pel : being weak in body, I was afraid
 " I could not go thro' it. But the longer
 " I spoke, the more strength I had. Info-
 " much that at twelve a clock all my wea-

(10) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750,
 p. 29. (1) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia
 to his return to London, p. 37.

" rynels

“riness and weakness was gone; and I
 “was as one refreshed with wine (2).” ---
 “Several of the Gentry desired to stay at
 “the meeting of the Society, to whom I
 “explained the nature of inward Religion,
 “words flowing upon me faster than I could
 “speak (3).” --- “I intended to have gi-
 “ven an exhortation to the Society. But
 “as soon as we met, the *Spirit of Supplica-*
 “*tion fell upon us*, so that I could hardly
 “do any thing but pray and give thanks,
 “till it was time for us to part (4).” But
 the Spirit soon came down in such a torrent
 that it took away all utterance.---“In the
 “evening the word of God was indeed
 “quick and powerful. Afterwards, I de-
 “fired the men as well as women to meet.
 “But I could not speak to them. *The Spirit*
 “*of prayer was so poured upon us all*, that we
 “could only speak to God (5).” So much
 larger a portion of the Spirit had Mr. J.
 Wesley and his flock than St. Paul and his,

(2) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20, 1750.
 P. 32. (3) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct.
 27, 1743. p. 87. (4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746.
 to July 20, 1750. p. 84-5. (5) Journ. from Sept.
 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 104.

N

who

who declared that *the Spirits of the Prophets were subject to the Prophets* (6).

The *exterior* assistances in his ministry were no less signal than the *interior*.—— Many were “seated on a large Wall adjoining, which being built of loose stones, in the middle of the Sermon, all fell down at once. I never saw, heard, nor read of such a thing before. The whole wall and the persons sitting upon it sunk down together, none of them screaming out, and very few altering their posture. And not one was hurt at all; but they appeared sitting at the bottom, just as they sat at the top. Nor was there any interruption either of my speaking, or of the attention of the hearers (7).” The next rises in due gradation. An unruly *mob* became of a sudden as harmless as the *stones*; tho’, had they met and opposed the ministry, *together*, one does not know what might have happened.——“The mob had just broke open the door, when we came

(6) 1 Cor. xiv. 32. (7) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20, 1750. p. 23.

“ into the lower room ; and exactly while
 “ they burst in at one door, we walked out
 “ at the other. Nor did one man take
 “ any notice of us, tho’ we were within
 “ five yards of each other (8).” With-
 out doubt they were struck *blind*; tho’,
 in imitation of the modest silence of the
 Evangelist, who relates the like adventure
 of the blessed Jesus, he forbears expressly
 to record that circumstance. — The
 next miracle was on his friends ; and these
 were as fairly struck *dumb*. — “ The
 “ whole multitude were silent, while I was
 “ speaking. Not a whisper was heard.
 “ But the moment I had done, the *Chain*
 “ *fell off their tongues*. I was really sur-
 “ prized. Surely never was such a kack-
 “ ling made on the banks of Cayster, or
 “ the Common of Sedgmoor (9).” And
 these *cacklings* being apparently female, *to*
chain up such tongues, he held, and with
 reason, an exploit worth recording. Indeed
 he appears, by his own account to have
 taken the most effectual method with them,
 that is, *outclamouring* them : For thus he :

(8) Ibid. p. 57.

(9) Ibid. p. 96.

measures out his own Stentoronic voice.---
 “ Observing that several sat on the side of
 “ the opposite hill, I afterwards desired
 “ one to measure the ground; and we
 “ found it was seven score yards from the
 “ place where I had stood. Yet the peo-
 “ ple there heard perfectly well. I did
 “ not think any human voice could have
 “ reached so far (10).” And as, on fit
 occasions, every courteous Knight Er-
 rant has condescended to let his *horse* into
 a share of his exploits, so our Spiritual ad-
 venturer not to break so good a custom, has
 divided (as St. Martin did his cloak with
 the Beggar) the next adventure with his
 Beast. “ My horse was exceeding lame---
 “ we could not discern what it was that was
 “ amiss, and yet he could scarce set his foot
 “ on the ground.--- My head ached more
 “ than it had done for some months (what
 “ I here aver is the naked fact; let every
 “ man *account for it* as he sees good). I then
 “ thought, “ Cannot God heal either
 “ man or beast, by any means, or *without*
 “ *any*! Immediately my weariness and head-

(10) Journ. from July 20. 1753. to Oct. 28,
 1754. p. 10.

“ ache

"ache ceased, and my Horse's lameness in
"the same instant. Nor did he halt any
"more either that day or the next. *A ve-*
"*ry odd accident this also (1)."*

Come we next to his GIFT OF HEAL-
ING. One of his miracles of this kind,
it seems, had been questioned; on which
occasion, he thus explains himself—"Mi-
"racle or no Miracle, the fact is plain.
"W. Kirkman is, I apprehend, still alive
"and able to certify for himself, that he
"had that cough threescore years, and
"since that time [viz. the miraculous aid
"afforded him] it has not returned (2)."
In the pamphlet where this extraordinary
case was first recorded, Mr. Wesley asks,
whether any one could suppose, that, if he
had performed it by his skill in physic,
he should not have been ready to do honour
to himself rather than transfer it to another.
If Mr. Wesley's question be sincere, he is
a dupe to his spiritual ambition. The

(1) Journ from Oct. 27, 1743. to Nov. 17,
1746. (2) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July
20, 1750. p. 123.

Character of a great Saint is infinitely more flattering than that of a great Physician.

---But to proceed.---“ I administered the
 “ Sacrament to R. A. Some years ago he
 “ found peace with God, and was freed at
 “ once without any human means from a
 “ distemper *naturally incurable* (3)”. But
 acute as well as chronical disorders fly before him.---“ I found (says he) Mr. Lunell
 “ in so violent a fever that there was little
 “ hope of his life. *He revived the moment*
 “ *he saw me*, and fell into a breathing sweat.
 “ He began to recover from that time.
 “ *Perhaps for this also was I sent* (4).”---“ In
 “ the evening I called upon Anne Calcut.
 “ She had been speechless for some time.
 “ But almost as soon as we began to pray,
 “ God restored her speech. She then
 “ witnessed a good confession indeed. I
 “ expected to see her no more. *But, from*
 “ *that hour, the fever left her*, and in a few
 “ days she arose and walked, glorifying

(3) Journ. from July 20, 1749. to Oct. 30, 1751. P. 34. (4) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743. P. 34.

" God (5)".--I visited several of the Sick.
 " Most of them were ill of the spotted Fe-
 " ver. Which, they informed me had
 " been extremely mortal, few persons reco-
 " vering from it. But God had said, *Hi-*
 " *thereto shalt thou come.* I believe there
 " was *not one* with whom we were, but he
 " recovered (6)".--" They told me the
 " Physician said, he did not expect Mr.
 " Meyrick would live till the morning.
 " I went to him, but his pulse was gone.
 " He had been speechless and senseless for
 " some time. A few of us immediately
 " joined in prayer (I relate the naked fact.)
 " Before we had done, his sense and his
 " speech returned. Now he that will ac-
 " count for this by *natural causes*, has my
 " free leave. I chuse to say, **THIS IS THE**
 " **POWER OF GOD (7)**". However, graci-
 " ous as this *free leave* is, I would not be the
 " man to advise any one to trust to it. Saints
 " are vindictive : And one cannot tell how

(5) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743.
 P. 34. (6) Journ. Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3,
 1741. p. 61. (7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to
 Oct. 27, 1743. p. 81.

far

far Mr. Wesley, may think the honour of God concerned in making so free with his Messenger as to take him at his word, after he hath solemnly assured us, of “ many
 “ living witnesses which God hath given,
 “ that *His hand is STILL stretched out to*
 “ *heal; and that signs and wonders are*
 “ even NOW, wrought by his holy Child
 “ JESUS (8).”

From the cure of natural diseases we proceed to the supernatural, or, saving your presence, to the CASTING OUT OF DEVILS: Having related, by way of prelude, the extravagances of a furious female Demoniack of nineteen or twenty years of age, whom he sat to rights without much ceremony; he proceeds immediately to another of the same Sex, but her he exorcises in form, and according to the true Roman fashion. —

“ I was sent for to one in Bristol. — She lay
 “ on the ground furiously gnashing her
 “ teeth, and after a while roared aloud.
 “ It was not easy for three or four persons

(8) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 40.

" to hold her, especially when the name
 " of Jesus was named. We prayed; the
 " violence of her symptoms ceased, *tho'*
 " *without a compleat deliverance.* In the
 " evening being sent for to her again, I
 " was unwilling, indeed afraid to go;
 " thinking it would not avail, unless some,
 " who were *strong in faith*, were to wrestle
 " with God for her. I opened my Testa-
 " ment on these words--*I was afraid, and*
 " *went and hid my talent in the earth.* I
 " stood reproved, and went immediately.
 " She began screaming before I came in-
 " to the room, then broke out into a hor-
 " rid laughter mixt with blasphemy,
 " grievous to hear. One who, from many
 " circumstances apprehended a preternatu-
 " ral agent to be concerned in this, asking,
 " How didst thou dare to enter into
 " a Christian? was answered, *She is no*
 " *Christian. She is mine.* Q. Dost thou
 " not tremble at the name of Jesus?
 " No words followed, but she shrunk back
 " and trembled exceedingly. Q. Art thou
 " not encreasing thy own damnation? It
 " was faintly answered, Ay, ay: which was
 followed,

“ followed by fresh cursing and blasphem-
“ ing. My Brother, coming in, she cried
“ out, *Preacher ! Field-Preacher. I do*
“ *not love field-preaching.*” This was repeat-
“ ed two hours together, with spittings
“ and all the expressions of strong aversion.
“ And now it was that God shewed, he
“ heareth the Prayer--- She was filled with
“ peace, and knew that the *Son of Wicked-*
“ *ness was departed from her.*”---This is ve-
ry well ; The next is not inferior, and fol-
lows immediately — “ I was sent for to
“ Kingswood again [namely to the young
woman with whom he preludes these at-
chievements] “ A violent rain began just
“ as I set out, so that I was thoroughly
“ wet in a few minutes. Just at that time
“ the woman (then three miles off) cried
“ out, Yonder comes Wesley, galloping
“ as fast as he can. When I was come, I was
“ quite cold and dead, and fitter for sleep
“ than prayer. She burst out into a horrid
“ laughter, and said, No power, no pow-
“ er ; no faith, no faith ; She is mine. Her
“ Soul is mine, I have her, and will not let
“ go. We begged of God to increase our
faith---

"faith---One, who was clearly convinced
 "this was no natural disorder, said, *I think*
 "*Satan is let loose. I fear he will not stop*
 "*here*; and added, I command thee in the
 "name of the Lord Jesus, to tell if thou hast
 "commission to torment any other Soul.
 "It was immediately answered, I have ;
 "L--y C---r and S---h J---s. two who
 "lived at some distance and were *then* in
 "perfect health (8)." In which, I dare say,
 they did not long continue after the Ex-
 orcist had thus consigned them over to Satan.
 But what is most material in this affair, (if
 we may believe either the Devil or Mr.
 Wesley) is this, That it is Mr. Wesley's
new birth only which makes the *Christian*;
 and that the Devil hates *field-Preaching*. To
 evince these great truths seems to have been
 the end both of the Possessions and of the
 Exorcisms. POPERY and PURITANISM, it
 is to be observed, have, in their times, re-
 ceived equal credit from the same reverend
 Testimonies, the Devil and the Priest : as
 the curious may read with pleasure in the

(8) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1.
 1739. P. 92, 93, & seq.

Detection of two famous impostures carried on in each of these Quarters, and recorded by the elegant pen of Dr. Samuel HARSNET, bishop of Norwich, and afterwards Arch-bishop of York. By which we may gather, that the Inhabitants below are divided into sects as well as those above, and that there are *Popish, Puritan, and Methodist*, DEVILS; who have all, in their turns, been forced to answer to interrogatories; and to depose in honour of the Sect they persecuted, at the expense of that to which they belonged.

Such were the blessings which Mr. Wesley distributed amongst his friends: for his enemies he had other things in store; the dreadful JUDGMENTS OF HEAVEN. Yet still the treatment was strictly Apostolical. "I preached (says he) at Darlaston, "ate a den of Lions: But most of the "fiercest of them God had called away by a "train of amazing strokes; and those that "remain are now as lambs (9)". His cor-

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749. to Oct. 30. 1751. p. 85.

rections, we see, had their proper effect.---

"I preached at R ——— once a place of
"furious riot and persecution; but quiet
"and calm, since the *bitter Rector is gone to*
"*give an account of himself to God* (10)."

"Hence we rode to T ——— where the Mi-
"nister was slowly recovering from a vio-
"lent fit of the Palsy, with which he was
"struck *immediately* after he had been
"preaching a virulent Sermon against the
"*Methodists* (1)." "The Rev. Mr. ———
"preached—and inveighed very much
"against the novel sect, the upstart *Metba-*
"*dists* ——— Shortly after, he was to preach
"[the same sermon again]. He had nam-
"ed the text twice, when he was suddenly
"seized with a ratling in his throat, at-
"tended with a hideous groaning. He
"fell backward against the door of the pul-
"pet;---was carried away, as it seemed,
"dead into the vestry. In two or three
"days he recovered his senses, and the
"sunday following, *died* (2)."

(10) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28,
1754. p. 11. (1) Journ. *ibid.* p. 23. (2) Journ.
from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 103-4.

“ One of the chief of those who came to
 “ make the disturbance on the first instant
 “ had *hanged himself*.----A second of them
 “ had been for some days in strong pain,
 “ and had many times sent to desire our
 “ prayers. A third came to me himself
 “ and confessed, he was hired that night
 “ and made drunk on purpose: But when
 “ he came to the door, *he knew not what*
 “ *was the matter*, he could not stir nor open
 “ his mouth (3).” Without doubt, there
 was something miraculous in a drunken
 man’s not being able to *open his mouth*.---
 “ I was quite surpris’d when I heard Mr.
 “ R— preach. That soft, smooth, tune-
 “ full voice, which he so often employed
 “ to *blaspheme the Work of God*, was lost
 “ without hope of recovery. All means
 “ had been tried, but none took place. He
 “ now spoke in a manner *shocking to*
 “ *hear, &c* (4).”---Mr. C. spoke so much
 “ in favour of the Rioters that they were all
 “ discharged---- a few days after Mr. C.

(3) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3,
 1741. (4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July
 20, 1750. p. 79.

“ walking over the same field *dropt down*
 “ and spoke no more. Surely the mercy
 “ of God would not suffer a well meaning
 “ man to be any longer a tool to *Persecu-*
 “ *tors* (5).” — “ Calling at Newgate
 “ [in Bristol] I was informed that the
 “ poor wretches under sentence of death
 “ were earnestly desiring to speak with
 “ me ; but that it could not be : Alder-
 “ man Beecher having just then sent an
 “ express order, that they should not. I
 “ cite Alderman Beecher to answer for these
 “ Souls at the judgment seat of Christ (6).”

In reviewing these JUDGMENTS, tho’ ful-
 minated with the air of one who had the di-
 vine Vengeance, at his disposal, I find these
 differences between his and the Apostles,

1. Their terrors were inflicted on Cheats
 and Impostors, such as *Ananias* and *Sap-*
phira ; *Elymas* the Sorcerer, and *Simon* the
 Magician : Whereas the judgments of this
 new Apostle fall only on the members of
 his own Church, for opposing the tumults
 of *field preaching*, and the freaks of, what

(5) Journ. *ibid.* p. 108. (6) Journ. *ibid.*
 P. 31.

he calls, THE NEW BIRTH. 2. The enemies of the infant Church were the Jewish Leaders; and they persecuted in good earnest; yet all these the Apostles left untouched, and reserved them for a future account: Mr. Wesley's enemies are his own fellow-members; and they persecute in jest, that is, they beat drums, they ring bells, and roar with the rabble; yet these, with unrelenting rage, he *cuts off for troubling him*: while the anger of the holy Apostle, on this occasion, never rose higher than a wish (7). These differences, I leave Mr. Wesley to reconcile. There is another which I think I may be able to account for, myself. 3. When the Apostles punished publicly, they as publicly pronounced sentence. Thus to Sapphira, *Behold the feet of them which buried thy husband are at the Door and shall carry thee out*; to Simon, *Thy money perish with thee*; and to Elymas--*now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind*--But, in this very important affair, Mr. Wesley

(7) *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* Gal. v. 12.

appears to have followed a better model, the practice of the INQUISITION; where, tho' the *Execution* be with all the bitter pomp of uncharitable piety, the *Sentence*, it is well known, is ever pronounced *in secret*. In one instance indeed, he varies from his model, and, at Bristol, commences, as we see, a regular process against Mr. *Alderman Beecher*; whom he summoneth, to give an account of himself before the Tribunal of Christ: But whether the Alderman demurred, or excepted to the jurisdiction; or indeed what became of him, after he had been so fairly cited, we no where learn.

These are some of the extraordinary graces of which Mr. J. Wesley assumes the privileges. But let not this exhibition of them be mistaken for a confutation. My purpose, here, is only to shew that he lays claim to them, and so becomes a proper subject of the APOSTOLIC TEST, which enables us to discriminate all sublunary wisdom from

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that which is *from above*. And if, on the application now to be made, he cannot bear the *touch*, it will be our fault not to see him for the future, in his genuine form of Deluder and Fannatic.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.